Guingona turns down 'Mindanao czar' position

Story on PAGE A2

FPJ: So who needs to campaign?

MAGULO ANG POLITICS... MAGUGULO ANG BUHOK KO D'YAN

By Marinel R. Cruz

HIS FRIEND Joseph Estrada wants him to run in 2004. President Macapagal-Arroyo is crossing her fingers that he won't.

For now, all he wants is to campaign for his current movie.

FPJ/ A19

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Gov't to take over Naia 3

JUST before the kiss that startles an audience of Lakas recruits from Batangas and Oriental Mindoro, an effusive President Macapagal greets Justice Secretary-on-leave Hernando Perez at the Palace. Then she pulls him down for The Kiss on his cheek. EDWIN BACASMAS

Palace abuzz over Gloria-Nani 'beso-beso'

By Dona Pazzibugan

COULD a kiss be just a kiss?

Not when it involves President Macapagal-Arroyo and a Cabinet official she had just asked to go on leave.

Ms Macapagal was visibly pleased to see Justice Secretary Hernando Perez in Malacañang yesterday.

It was the first time the two met since Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez accused Perez on Monday of extorting $2 million and since the President asked Perez to go on a 30-day leave.

But yesterday, she greeted him not just with a smile and a handshake, but also with a buss on the cheek.

Perez was in Malacañang with other Cabinet officials for the oath-taking of local officials from Batangas and Oriental Mindoro as Lakas members. Perez was a former congressman of Batangas.

Upon entering the Ceremonial Hall, Ms Macapagal was all smiles as she approached Perez. She extended her right hand to Perez for a handshake, which the secretary took.

Then to the surprise of many, the President reached out to Perez's neck with her left hand and pulled him down for a *beso-beso.*

Perez, who was obviously caught off-guard, was all smiles afterward.

The friendly buss was no big deal, except that she did not extend the same warm greeting to the other men in the reception line, including presidential adviser Eduardo Ermita.

PALACE/ A19

Scrapping of deal sets off 2-part airport plan

By Amando Doronila and Dona Pazzibugan

SAYING she was ready to invoke "the whole powers of the presidency," President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday annulled the controversial series of contracts granted to Philippine International Air Terminals Co. to build and operate Naia 3.

This sets in motion the government's two-phase operational plan for a temporary takeover of the $657-million airport.

The President said the Office of the Solicitor General and the Department of Justice have determined that all five agreements covering Naia 3, most of which were contracted during the Estrada administration, are "null and void."

The President then went further, when she ordered the DOJ and the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission to investigate the irregularities in the contracts and prosecute those responsible for breaches in the agreements.

"I cannot honor contracts which the executive branch's legal offices have concluded (to be) null and void," Ms Macapagal announced during the 2002 Golden Shell Awards for top exporters held in Malacañang yesterday.

The decision set the stage for a temporary takeover by the government of the controversy-ridden terminal to ensure its opening by the second quarter of 2003, break the virtual monopoly to operate airport services awarded to Piatco and rebid them for a fair distribution of concessions.

Announcing the decision on the eve of her report to the nation today to emphasize the theme of a "strong republic," the President said the cancellation of the contracts sends a

GOV'T/ A5

GMA preempted SC, claims Piatco

By Abigail L. Ho and Norman Bordadora

A PRELUDE to an authoritarian regime?

A ranking official of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) yesterday scored the President's decision to scrap the Naia 3 contracts awarded to Piatco, saying it seemed like a prelude to authoritarianism as the government unilaterally decided on the fate of a project that a private company undertook.

Piatco vice president for public affairs Moises Tolentino said the nullification effectively preempted the Supreme Court's decision on the legality of the contracts.

The high court has scheduled oral arguments on Dec. 10.

"She preempted the decision of the Supreme Court. We'll be studying whether or not the President can be cited in contempt of court, or at least her legal advisers."

He added: "This is the first

GMA/ A6

MJ: Leave Gloria, Mike out of this

By Juliet Javellana, Michael Lim Ubac and Donna S. Cueto

"LET'S leave the President and the First Gentleman out of this."

Rep. Mark Jimenez yesterday cleared the First Couple of involvement in the alleged $2-million extortion involving Justice Secretary-on-leave Hernando "Nani" Perez—even as he refused to comment on the alleged Coutts Bank money trail which was tracked the other day in a column of the INQUIRER's Victor Agustin.

"It's hard to talk about details if we do not open the account," Jimenez said. The truth will come out once Account No. HO 13706 is opened, he added.

He also said speculation about the involvement of the President and First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo was baseless.

"They have nothing to do with, no knowledge of this extortion. It's only Nani Perez and (Ernest) Escaler (who are involved)," Jimenez said in a news forum.

But he scored the government for allowing businessman Escaler to leave the country.

Jimenez, who is facing extradition to the United States, lamented that the government did not stop Escaler from leaving the

MJ/ A19

No sweeping revamp but there'll be changes

By Carlito Pablo

TALKS of a Cabinet revamp sizzled in the corridors of Malacañang on the eve of President Macapagal-Arroyo's major policy address to be held at the Palace today.

"A strong republic" is expected to be the theme of the President's "Ulat sa Bayan" speech which coincides with the celebration of National Heroes' Day.

An INQUIRER source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said a Cabinet reorganization is deemed a major component in President Macapagal's push to put up a strong republic.

A new face in the Cabinet might be Luis "Cito" Lorenzo Jr. as environment secretary vice Heherson Alvarez.

Yesterday, the Palace reportedly sent official word to certain Cabinet men who would be affected by the shake-up.

NO/ A6

Gov't pulling all stops to make RP safe—GMA

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said her administration was pulling out all the stops to make the Philippines a "safe and desirable place for business."

"We don't know when or where in the whole world terror will strike again, but we're doing everything to thwart its attempts or mitigate its effects," she said in a speech in Malacañang at a ceremony honoring the country's exporters.

"These measures—economic, political, security—are all designed to make the Philippines a safe and desirable place for business," she said, adding:

"We shall remain on alert."

The President made the declaration a day after the embassies of Australia and Canada and the office of the European Commission in Makati closed down because of "explicit" and "credible" threats of an imminent attack.

Her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao indicated that the administration was upset at the Australian government's refusal to disclose the intelligence report that prompted the closure of its embassy ***(See story at right)***.

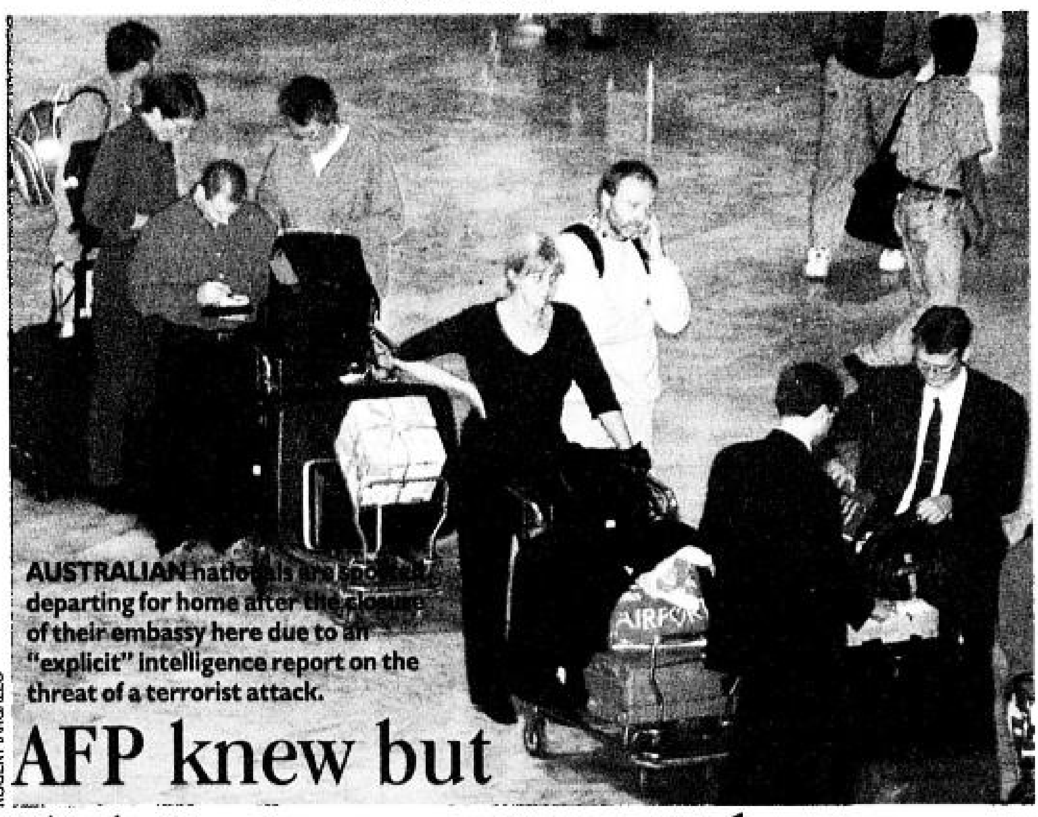
"They should have shared it with our intelligence agencies. They would not disclose their sources," he said at his regular press briefing.

He pointed out that while an embassy was an extension of a country's sovereign territory, the Philippine government was ultimately responsible if a terrorist attack indeed occurred.

"Our intelligence people have not exactly been sleeping on the job," he said.

But Tiglao was quick to add that Australia

GOV'T/ A19



AUSTRALIAN nationals are spotted departing for home after the closure of their embassy here due to an "explicit" intelligence report on the threat of a terrorist attack. ROGER MARGALLO

AFP knew but didn't act on terror threats

By Juliet L. Javellana, Norman Bordadora and TJ Burgonio

THE EMBASSIES of Australia and Canada informed the Philippine military as early as August and September about supposed planned attacks but no action was taken, the chair of the House committee on foreign relations said yesterday.

Negros Occidental Rep. Apolinario Lozada said officials of the two embassies had told him that the information was given to the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces (Isafp). "Unfortunately, we did nothing," he said.

Committee vice chair Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos added that the Isafp had known of potential targets but failed to take steps to secure them.

She said more black eyes were expected because the French, British and Saudi Embassies were supposedly on heightened alert and might also be considering a shutdown.

The Australian and Canadian Embassies and the office of the European Union remained shuttered yesterday.

The Israeli Embassy also shut down yesterday, but Ambassador Irit Ben Abba said this was because of a report of a planned protest demonstration there.

Abba said their embassy, also in Makati, would resume operations on Monday.

According to reports reaching the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Australian Embassy will open next week and the Canadian Embassy will announce an alternative office on Monday.

AFP/ A19

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/30/02

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

Guingona turns down 'Mindanao czar' job

Red-faced Palace withdraws appointment

By D. Pazzibugan and N. Bordadora

AN EMBARRASSED Malacañang yesterday withdrew its appointment of Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. as "Mindanao czar" after Guingona rejected it.

Guingona apparently did not like the title nor the Cabinet rank that went with it.

"He did not accept the designation of Mindanao czar because in the first place there was no such agreement. We apologize for that," said Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao.

Guingona, whose distinguishing mark has been to deny Malacañang announcements regarding his participation in the Macapagal-Arroyo Cabinet, yesterday denied an announcement made by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye the other day that he had accepted a position in the Cabinet as "Mindanao czar."

He suggested that his assumption of the leadership of a new people's organization, the revived Bagong Bandila, may have prompted Malacañang to announce that he had rejoined the Cabinet.

"There exists no such appointment from the Palace and no acceptance from me," Guingona told a press conference yesterday.

At a gathering of critics of the controversial Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) at the University of the Philippines later yesterday, Guingona reiterated the denial, saying he "cannot turn my back on my commitment to the Filipino people now that we need to conduct a massive campaign to educate the farmers and workers on the MLSA."

In late June, Guingona denied a Malacañang announcement that he had resigned as foreign secretary. Two weeks later, he did resign, citing "policy differences" with the President, particularly over the MLSA.

Bunye yesterday gamely took the fall for the mistaken announcement.

President Macapagal-Arroyo apparently issued the other day Administrative Order 45 giving Guingona sweeping oversight powers over four programs with nationwide scope as well as "other socio-economic programs, particularly those involving the development of Mindanao."

Accordingly, Bunye announced that day that AO 45 formalized Guingona's appointment as "Mindanao czar." He also said the title carried a Cabinet rank.

In a statement yesterday, Bunye clarified that "the term 'czar'" did not appear anywhere in the administrative order and its use (was) entirely my own interpretation."

In his clarification yesterday, Tiglao explained that the President and Guingona had agreed that the latter would be given oversight powers over the four programs—the Overseas Filipino Investment Bond; the Housing Program for Overseas Filipino Workers and Others; the Seafarer's Welfare Program; and the establishment of an integrated steel plant in Mindanao.

Tiglao said Ms Macapagal and Guingona agreed on this in July when Guingona resigned as foreign secretary.

It was Ms Macapagal who had told reporters shortly after Guingona's resignation that she was planning to appoint the vice president as her "Mindanao czar."

Bunye admitted that Guingona may have rejected the Cabinet rank "because of his stand on certain policy issues which may not be consistent with those of the administration."

But he said Guingona was "willing to be active in those programs mentioned in the administrative order."

At his press conference yesterday, Guingona said AO 45 only "reiterates the President's support for the implementation of programs previously agreed upon. I shall vigorously pursue them."

He explained that he was not accepting a Cabinet appointment "because I want flexibility and because of these organizations, the Bagong Bandila, that I have taken (on)."

"I cannot in conscience turn my back on certain positions and programs supported by individuals and organizations like Bagong Bandila that have aired their concerns for the nation's welfare," he said.

Guingona on Wednesday accepted the position of head of the council of advisers of the revived Bandila, one of the people's organizations that led the grassroots movement against the Marcos dictatorship and helped catapult former President Corazon Aquino to power.

In his speech at the UP gathering called the "Assembly of Patriots," Guingona reiterated his objection to the "clandestine manner" in which the MLSA was allegedly signed, saying the agreeement should be examined thoroughly and submitted to the people for their approval. *With reports from Agnes Donato and Gerald G. Lacuarta*

Gov't takes over Diwalwal gold mines

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE GOVERNMENT has taken over the lucrative gold mining operations in Mt. Diwalwal in Monkayo, Compostela Valley.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday signed Proclamation 297 which named the 8,100-hectare mining area a "mineral reservation" and an environmentally-critical area.

This means the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will take over all private mining operations in the "reservation."

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the administration hoped the proclamation would lead to the end of rampant unsafe mining practices in gold-rich Mt. Diwalwal.

Malacanang earlier suspended mining operations in Mt. Diwalwal to allow the DENR to rationalize mining in the area with a view to protecting the environment.

In the proclamation, the President said all mining operations could only be undertaken by the DENR "subject to payment of just compensation... to legitimate and existing claimants."

The President also ordered the DENR to establish an "environmental and social fund" as it converts the area into a mineral reservation.

Aussies protest RP ban on beef over anthrax case

MANILA/SYDNEY—Australia's beef industry said on Friday it has received notification of a Philippines ban on imports over an isolated anthrax case, but hoped the trade could return to normal soon.

It complained the ban was an over-reaction.

"It's a harsh and unnecessary measure," said Bill Hetherington, chief executive officer of industry body the Australian Meat Council. "We're hopeful that they'll (government officials) reach some resolution quite quickly."

Meat is Australia's biggest export to the Philippines, worth more than A$300 million ($168 million) in 2001. There is also a large trade in Australian live cattle, so far unaffected by bans.

On Thursday, the Australian government and beef industry denied that bans had been imposed because of lack of formal notification from the Philippine government.

This was contradicted by the Philippines' Bureau of Animal Industry, which said that veterinary quarantine clearance (VQC) certificates were not being issued for imports from Australia.

Further meetings could take place on Friday between Australian and Filipino authorities in Manila, Hetherington said.

"What I have been informed is that our agriculture secretary (Leonardo Montemayor) talked this morning with Australian Ambassador to Manila (Ruth Pearce)," an official from the Philippines' Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) said on Friday, but declined to elaborate.

Officials at Montemayor's office declined to confirm the meeting, saying only that the secretary had been in the congress for a budget hearing since this afternoon.

A spokesperson for Australian Trade Minister Mark Vaile said the Australian government has written a letter to authorities in the Philippines on Friday "asking what's going on."

"We're waiting for a response," she said.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service had inspected the farm where the anthrax outbreak had occurred and was completely satisfied that there were no risks, she said.

Australian animals had been vaccinated against anthrax, which was prevalent in countries throughout the world, Hetherington said. With stringent ante-and post-mortem inspections. Australian animals with anthrax did not enter the food chain.

"There is just no risk." On Thursday, the Philippines Agricultural Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said: "We cannot compromise the health and safety of the Filipino people."

BAI officials on Friday said they had sent a letter to Australian officials asking for information on measures to control the outbreak. *Reuters*

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LaoagAir owner arrested

TWO top foreign executives of a domestic airline involved in a crash that killed 19 people were arrested Friday for working here without permits, the Bureau of Immigration said yesterday. Paul C. Ng, the Malaysian chairman of Laoag International Airlines, and Jimmy Tan Teng Chui, an Australian who also sits on the board and works as the airline's chief mechanic, were arrested by intelligence operatives at their offices in Laoag City, the bureau said.

Both were detained on orders by Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo on Thursday, when she also placed them and two pilots of the crashed LaoagAir Fokker 27 plane on a "watch list" to prevent them from leaving the country.

Domingo became "curious" about the status of the two company officers and ordered a check following the plane crash, said Immigration spokesperson Raymond Salting.

Domingo said in a statement that officials found that Ng holds a resident visa because he married a woman from the Philippines, but that does not permit him to work, while Tan entered the country as a tourist.

A LaoagAir spokesperson said he had no information about the immigration status of the two executives.

But Ng has been living in the Philippines as a permanent resident for the past 15 years and was close to obtaining Philippine citizenship, said the spokesperson, Alvin Manuel Yater. Tan serves as the company's engineering consultant, Yater said, but he did not know how many years Tan had been working in the Philippines.

The airline's plane went down in Manila Bay shortly after taking off for a regular one-hour flight for Laoag, about 410 km north of Manila. Fifteen people survived, including the pilot and co-pilot. Among those who died were five Australians and three Britons.

The airline's operations have been suspended during the crash investigation.

Initial investigation showed that the plane's engines stalled in mid-air allegedly after the pilots failed to turn on the fuel switch.

AFP, AP

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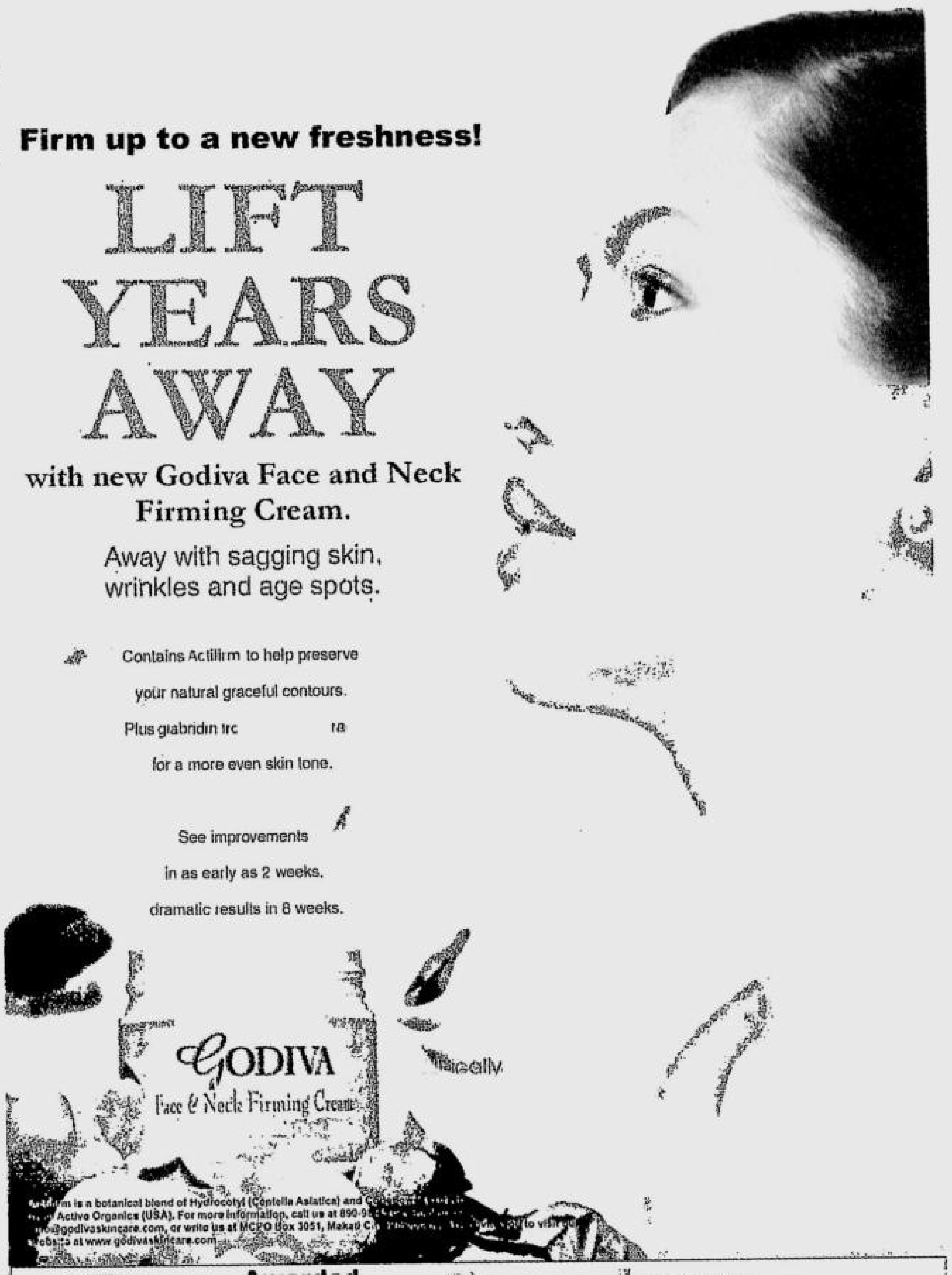

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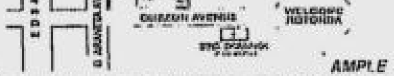

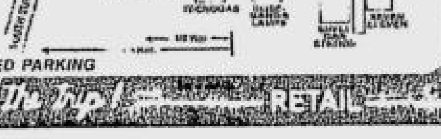

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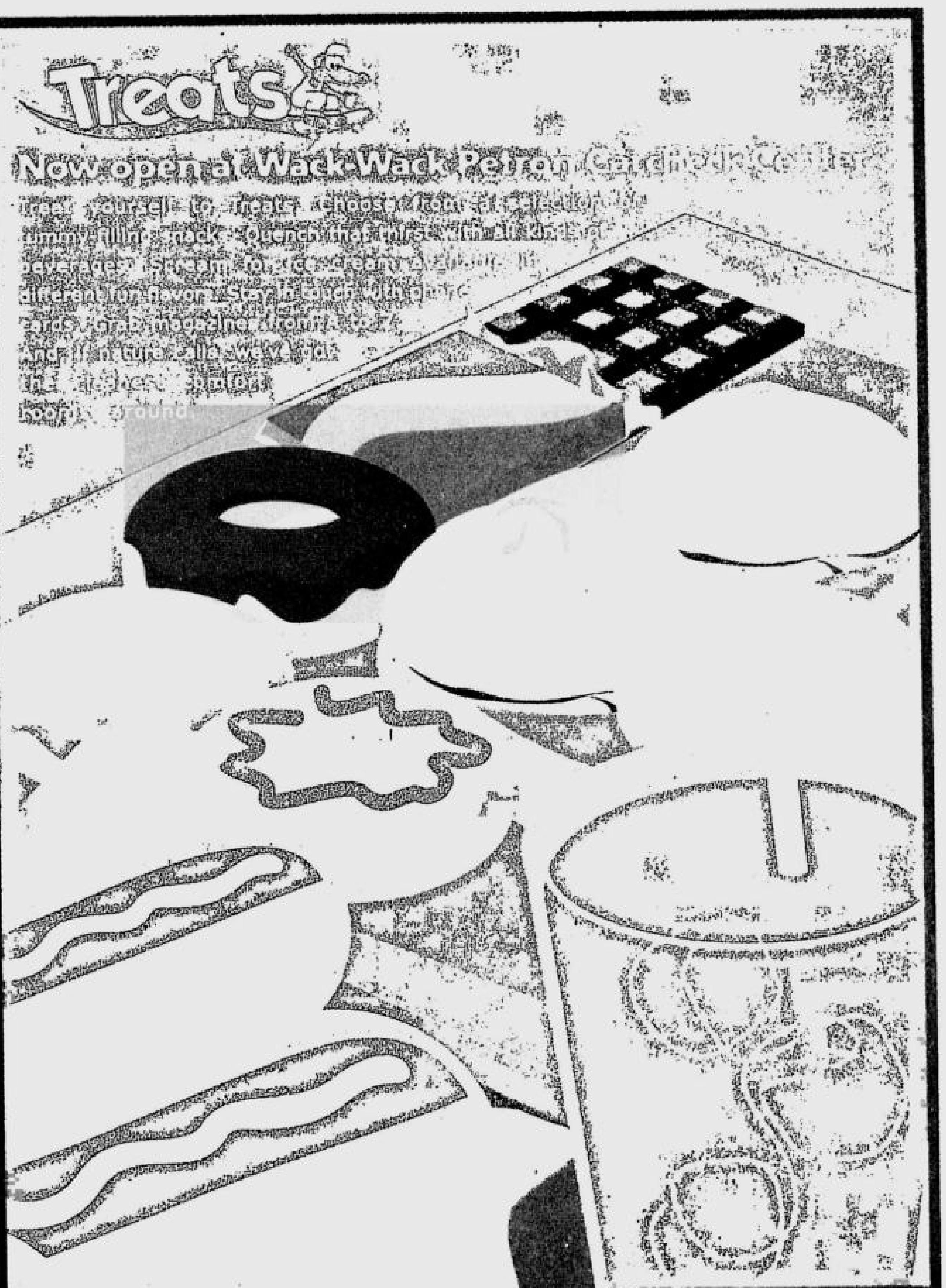

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PETRON

Church blamed for population woes

By Volt Contreras

GOVERNMENT has no clear policy on how to curb the country's growing population, now pegged at about 76 million, and the major cause is the Catholic Church's opposition to the promotion of modern family planning methods, speakers at the 2002 National Population Congress said yesterday.

UP economics professor Alejandro Herrin said that from recent government policy statements, "it appears that the fertility reduction objective of family planning has been downplayed, if not rejected."

Family planning programs adopted by governments from the Marcos years down to the present have been marked by "shifting objectives" and "lack of stable consensus," he said in a paper delivered at the congress.

Herrin attributed this to the "consistent opposition" of the Church to the very idea of population control and the use of contraceptives.

He said that while national leaders should be sensitive to people's religious beliefs, they "should not base policy on what is considered sinful by some groups."

"To allow only natural family planning methods limits the choices of those who do not subscribe to the doctrine," Herrin said.

He said that if government is unable to get "cooperation" from the Catholic hierarchy in promoting artificial contraception, it should explore possible "collaboration with other religious groups not opposed" to such methods.

Rene Cristobal of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines said Thailand was able to implement a successful population control program because the government allowed the private sector to handle it.

El Shaddai backs Erap house arrest

By Armand N. Nocum

THE RELIGIOUS group El Shaddai has added its voice to an earlier call that ousted President Joseph Estrada be placed on house arrest, saying transferring him from the hospital where he is at present detained will effect a true "healing" among warring political groups in the country.

In joining cause with the Iglesia ni Cristo which spearheaded the call, El Shaddai, through spokesperson Mel Robles, clarified that the group was not seeking to have Estrada's alleged crimes condoned or place itself in a position where it obstructs justice.

"We do not need to condone or pardon (Estrada). The court case can go on," Robles said. Placing Estrada under house arrest he added, was a "first step toward national healing and reconciliation."

"This is not an issue of justice or mercy, this is already about national survival," he said, quoting the maxim, "Extraordinary times calls for extraordinary solution to problems."

Earlier, Iglesia ni Cristo spokesperson Bienvenido Santiago said the church was moving toward either making a formal request to the Palace or filing a petition with the Sandiganbayan to have Estrada detained at home and not at the Veterans Medical Center where he is under "hospital arrest."

NEWSBRIEFS

3 Abus arrested in Basilan

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Three suspected members of the notorious Abu Sayyaf Muslim group were arrested and nine other Muslim militants surrendered to authorities in the South, officials said yesterday. The three alleged Abu Sayyaf gunmen, Abdulajid Ngaya, Haji Sabtali and Lidjalon Sakandal, were nabbed near an army checkpoint close to Lamitan, Basilan, Thursday, officials said. The soldiers were tipped off by Lamitan residents who said the three were part of an Abu Sayyaf unit that raided the town last year, seizing numerous villagers and later beheading 11 Christian farmers. In Lanao del Sur, nine members of the larger Moro Islamic Liberation Front surrendered to the government Wednesday, army spokesperson Danile Lucero said.

AFP

Imelda Papin files sex raps vs exec

PAPIN

CAMARINES Sur Vice Gov. Imelda Papin yesterday sued a member of the provincial board for allegedly making sexual advances on her. The former pop singer-turned-politician lodged an administrative complaint before the Ombudsman against Crisanto Rances, calling for his dismissal from public service for grave or immoral conduct. She also filed a criminal complaint against Rances before the Camarines Sur provincial prosecution office, charging him with acts of lasciviousness. In a three-page complaint filed with the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon, Papin alleged that the respondent embraced, kissed and touched her breast against her will at around 3:30 p.m. on Nov. 5 at the conference room of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan Building in Pili town. She claimed that the incident was witnessed by some members of the Board, namely Alicia Espiritu, Ariel Orino and Paul Prado. Papin noted that Rances has a pending sexual harassment case before the Sandiganbayan's Third Division, filed by one Elvira Cledera.

Volt Contreras

DOJ issues hold order on Multitel execs

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has issued a hold departure order against Rosario and Saturnino Baladjay and their associates in the alleged Multitel investment scam. An official of the Securities and Exchange Commission, however, said that the government agency has received reports that Julius Gonzalo Fuentabella, one of Multitel's most active agents and counselors, has already left the country and was now in Canada. The hold departure order issued by the justice department covers the Baladjay couple, Fuentabella, Rodolfo Pagtalunan Jr. and Marissa Castulo, all of whom are incorporators of Multitel International Holdings Inc. and some of whom are incorporators of other related companies such as Richville Travel and Tours, Multitel Consultancy and a realty company. The order also includes Everflow Group of Companies controlling stockholders Iris and Felix Aquino. Castulo has been cooperating with the SEC in the case against the Baladjays while Pagtalunan appeared to be simply a dummy for Baladjay, a SEC official said. It is estimated that the Multitel group, including conduit companies and cooperatives, had received over the past two years of operations between P20 billion to P25 billion in placements from investors.

Strikes lowest in 21 years–Sto. Tomas

THE INCIDENCE of strikes in the country has dropped to its lowest rate in 21 years, the Department of Labor and Employment said. In a report to the Senate, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said only 31 strikes were staged from January to October this year. Sto. Tomas, who defended the DOLE's proposed P4.5-billion budget, said she expected the peaceful industrial climate to be sustained until next year. Records from the National Mediation and Conciliation Board showed that 91 percent of the strikes this year has been disposed. Of the 31 strikes, 15 were in Metro Manila, seven in Southern Tagalog, three in Region 7, two in Region 3 and one each in Regions 1, 8, 9 and 11. NCMB director Rolando Rico Olalia said the cases were disposed at an average of 23 days compared to 34 days last year. Six regions remained strike-free in the first ten months of the year, according to the NCMB. Sto. Tomas said the peaceful industrial situation was proof of the maturity of labor and management at this difficult economic phase.

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Gov't to take over Naia 3, sets off 2-part plan

From page A1

strong political message. She said her decision was "a test case of my administration's commitment to fight corruption, to free our state from the hold of any vested interest."

Piatco shareholders, led by Chinese-Filipino businessman Cheng Yong, have accused its German partner, Fraport AG, of turning its back on the consortium and negotiating a separate agreement with the government, allegedly engineered by presidential adviser for strategic concerns Gloria Tan Climaco.

The nearly completed $657-million terminal would have four times the capacity of the existing main airport terminal and can handle 13 million passengers annually.

Adverse reaction

A spokesperson for the Cheng group, Piatco vice president Moises Tolentino, said Ms Macapagal's announcement was nothing less than an attempt by the government to take over the facility.

Tolentino told ABS-CBN television the Supreme Court was to hear petitions next month on the legality of the Piatco contract, and that Ms Macapagal's statement could be perceived as "an attempt to influence" the high court.

A leading businessman, Miguel Varela of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, was even more caustic. "What foreign investor in his right mind would dare put in a single penny into the country after this blatant disregard for the country's corporate law," Varela asked. *(Story on Page A1.)*

But the President said the Piatco issue was not just a simple problem but "a test case of the integrity and efficiency of the Republic in building the infrastructure the nation requires," she said. "An international airport is any nation's gateway to the world, the first contact of foreigners to the Philippine Republic."

The message was telegraphed apparently to counter the adverse publicity stemming from the charges of alleged extortion fired by Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez against Secretary of Justice Hernando Perez. Observers also said the bold move was meant to demonstrate that the government was acting to regain the political initiative, following several months of listlessness.

The President announced the decision after acting Secretary of Justice Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez issued the opinion that the 1997 concession agreement was void because the agreement contained "material deviations" from the bid documents and the draft concession agreement (DCA). Consequently, the amendments to the 1997 contract "are void because the obligations that they intend to modify are invalid."

The opinion laid the ground for the government to take over the terminal. Piatco has invested some $16.5 million and Fraport, operator of the Frankfurt International Airport in Germany, around $400 million in the terminal.

Two phases

The opinion set in motion a government takeover plan consisting of two phases. This plan, invoking the President's exercise of extraordinary powers on behalf of the public interest, called for a takeover while the Supreme Court decides on legal issues raised by several parties against Piatco. The President's decision also jumps ahead of the report of the Senate blue ribbon committee on its inquiry into the Piatco contracts.

Phase 1 of the government's plan calls for the opening of the terminal by the second quarter of 2003 with the assistance of a technical service provider (Fraport) for a maximum of two years under the supervision of a steering committee. The committee will be composed of representatives of the Office of the President, Department of Transportation and Communication, Manila International Airport Authority, Commission on Audit, Department of Tourism and the DOJ.

The committee will be responsible for, among others, operational preparations for opening the terminal, transfer of airlines, corrective construction work, connection between Terminal 2 and Terminal 3, safety and security arrangements—with the latter to be exercised by the government rather than by Piatco. It will be responsible for awarding contracts to tenants, service providers, concessionaires, duty-free shops and airlines.

The government will negotiate with Fraport to buy out its $400 investment through a German soft loan. This means that the government will not spend public money for the buyout while allowing Fraport to operate the terminal because of its expertise.

The committee will also negotiated for an amicable settlement with Piatco for the transition. This suggests a buyout of Piatco's equity.

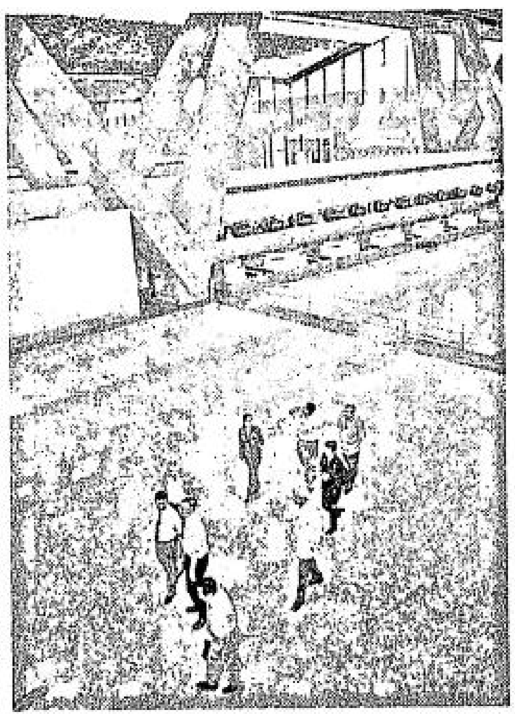
The committee will also be responsible for the negotiations for a long-term loan to pay for Terminal 3.

Phase 2 seeks to operate the terminal with the assistance of a foreign partner (Fraport), under terms to be advised by a financial advisor for which a bidding committee should be organized.

The government has concluded that to ensure safety and security, the airport can be operational only by April, at the earliest. This conclusion overturns a previous statement by the President for a "soft opening" on Dec. 14, which is physically impossible.

The government heeded the findings of the IATA (International Air Transport Association) mission which inspected the terminal last October. Its report said no one knew what "soft opening" meant, and that it was most likely that foreign airlines would be in a position to move in at least in mid February 2003.

In a news briefing, Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said Piatco investors can choose between two options: either agree to "just compensation" and turn over Naia 3 to the government; or cancel the existing contract and negotiate a new one.


NAIA Terminal 3: Test case of integrity

He said a government takeover is also an option.

"One option is to come up with a new contract that would be more legally binding. Another option is for them to agree to just compensation, after which the government can contract another company to operate the airport," Tiglao said. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and AFP*

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No sweeping revamp but there will be changes

From page A1

"But the Cabinet changes had been under way, said a op Palace official. He said other changes will not be done n one fell swoop. It will happen on a case-to-case basis.

Take the case of Justice Secretary-on-leave Hernando Perez. President Macapagal herself told the INQUIRER last Saturday that she was set to ask Perez to go on eave during her speech today. But Perez had to go on leave sooner with the Jimenez exposé last Monday.

In a briefing a few days ago, Bunye said that President Macapagal's speech would also touch on the "$2-million man" controversy involving Perez..

Sources said that Perez may no longer come back as a Cabinet member.

"His leave may be extended or he'll just resign," a source said. "The point is, Perez is virtually finished."

While Malacañang mouthpieces, namely presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao and Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, have repeatedly denied that a shake-up is in the offing, Palace insiders are consistently saying that a reorganization is due.

"A revamp is necessary and if one is not announced this Saturday, then it will just have to happen in the nearest future," an administration source said.

Sources reached gave varying accounts on the purported blueprint for the supposed Cabinet revamp.

The timetables also vary and range from as early as today should the President announce changes in her Cabinet during her speech to March next year.

Despite variance in the details and the extent of the revamp, the INQUIRER sources generally confirmed the stories on a Cabinet revamp ran by the INQUIRER in the last few weeks.

Probable changes

One source told the INQUIRER that Environment Secretary Alvarez may be let go.

Alvarez has strongly taken exception to such a report, stating among others that his department is currently enjoying high approval ratings in the surveys.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez may be on the way out because of his supposed wish to go back to the private sector. But the President wants to retain him. He supposedly rejected the President's offer to head DENR.

Jesus Alcordo, former president of the National Power Corp., is reportedly one of those being considered to replace Perez.

On the other hand, Perez may be tapped to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources if Alvarez would be yanked out of the Cabinet.

The INQUIRER also reported previously that Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor may be replaced with a more dynamic official whose management style is more attuned to the President's.

The Palace's reported intention is to have Montemayor switch posts with the younger Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza.

Another version has it that Montemayor would simply be shown the door.

Previous INQUIRER reports also stated that Interior Secretary Jose Lina may be designated as campaign manager of the administration slate in the 2004 elections.

Lina's post will purportedly go to either Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, former chief of the Philippine National Police, or Michael Defensor, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

'Dream team' stays

President Macapagal's "dream team" of economic managers will supposedly be spared, despite problems in the budget deficit.

Ms Macapagal, however, may decide to name a new commissioner at the Bureau of Customs, the post being held by Antonio Bernardo.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue, now headed by Commissioner Guillermo Parayno, will not be touched.

In a speech in Camp Aguinaldo last Thursday, the President had reiterated her confidence in Parayno, who had replaced Rene Bañez who resigned.

GMA preempts ...

From page A1

time that the President did such a thing (sudden nullification)."

The abrupt decision could also be a sign that the President's legal advisers were trying to sway the high tribunal in one direction, he said.

"The President's advisers just want to send signals to the Supreme Court that this is the decision that they want it to make. But we have faith in the Supreme Court. We know it will come up with a fair, just and legal decision," he said.

In a separate Piatco statement, businessman Miguel Varela was quoted as saying that the President's decision would have adverse consequences.

"This action by the President will not escape eagle-eyed financial and economic analysts worldwide, and would surely contribute to the further downgrading of the country's already negative status as an investment recipient," he explained.

Tolentino suggested that the decision was the Macapagal administration's attempt to divert attention from the scandals currently surrounding it.

He cited as examples the "$2-million-man" issue hounding Justice Secretary-on-leave Hernando Perez, the finance department's Manila Electric Co. takeover "proposal" and the P600-million Diosdado Macapagal Avenue overpricing controversy.

Before declaring the Piatco contract null and void, the President "unilaterally" announced the deferment of the Naia 3's soft opening from Dec. 15 to April next year, he said.

Tolentino said the government seemed to be showing "signs of regression" as the democracy that it so flaunted to the whole world was slowly leaning toward authoritarianism.

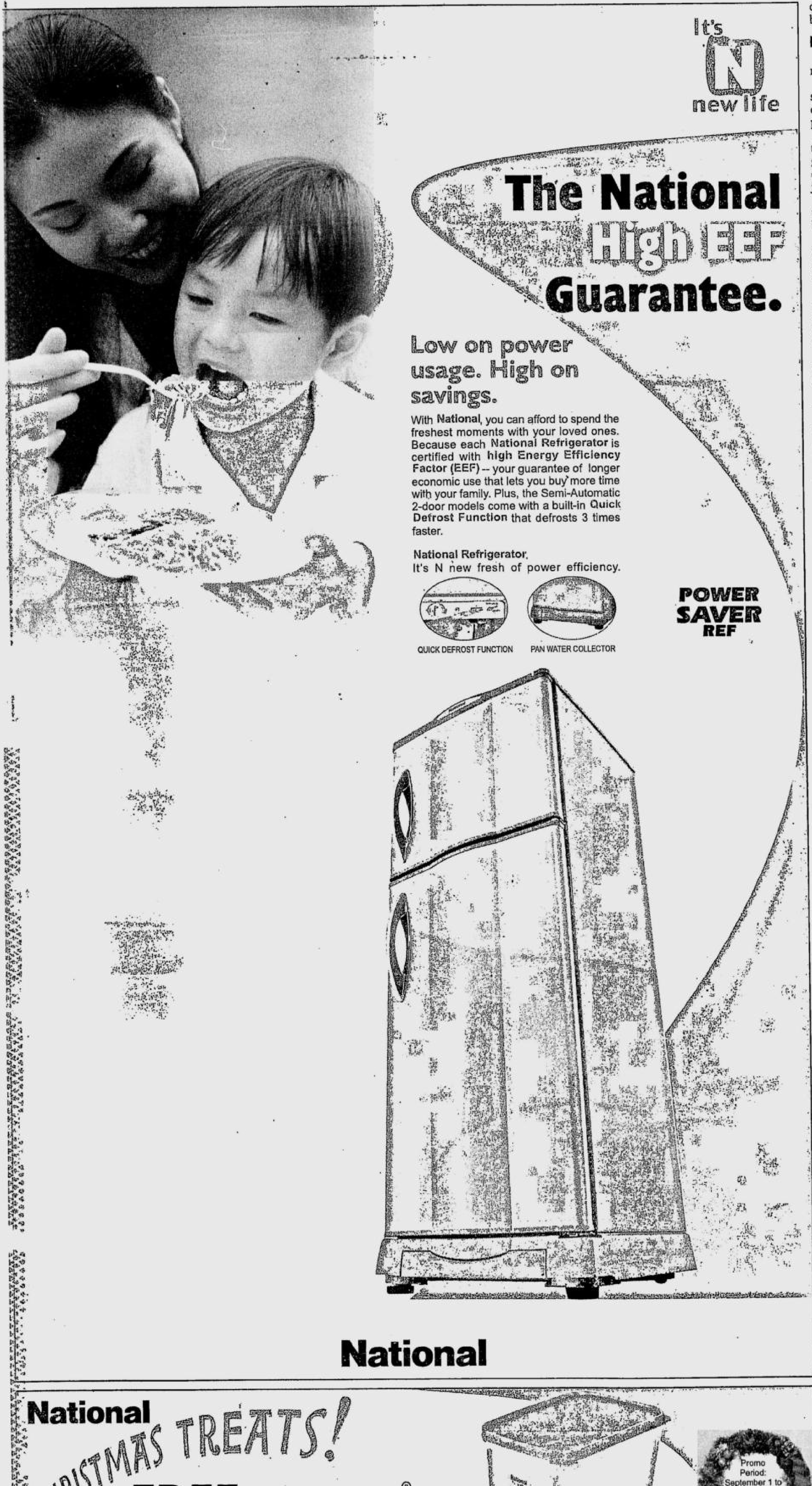
"The President's advisers seem to be pushing for an authoritarian rule. It's a totally unusual action, really out of this world. With this decision, President Macapagal-Arroyo has put the presidency at odds with the judiciary," he said.

He added that both the Cheng family—Piatco's majority shareholder—and foreign partner Frankfurt Airport Services Worldwide (Fraport AG) stood to lose from the government's sudden declaration, and said that the two parties would most probably be working together to overcome this new hurdle.

Piatco, Tolentino added, is studying all its legal options, including a possible elevation of the case to the level of international arbitration in Singapore.

"The timing of the announcement was obviously to influence the Supreme Court justices into taking the Gloria Tan Climaco line," Tolentino added. Climaco led a committee that reviewed the Piatco contract and declared some of its salient provisions as onerous.

"We were waiting for the Supreme Court decision to vindicate us, and now comes the President's shocker arrogating legal powers unto herself," Tolentino said.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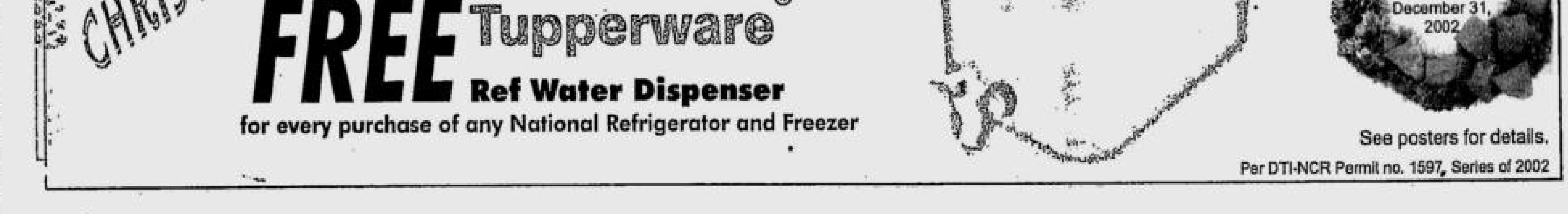
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House fails to approve 2003 nat'l budget

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE GOVERNMENT will be starting the new year using a reenacted 2002 budget for at least a month after the House failed to meet its deadline yesterday to wrap up plenary deliberations on the proposed 2003 budget as well as take a vote on it.

Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales said that because deliberations on the budget of many big departments have not been completed, the deliberations on House Bill No. 5238, or the general appropriations bill for 2003, are to continue next week.

Gonzales said that after meeting late Thursday with Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya, who chairs the House appropriations committee, it was decided that the House vote on the budget bill would have to be taken on Tuesday or Wednesday.

This means the House would be able to submit the bill to the Senate for scrutiny and approval only on Dec. 14 or 15, he said.

This would in turn leave the Senate with only three days to discuss the bill before Congress takes its final break for the year on Dec. 18, thus reinforcing the belief of some congressional leaders that the budget measure would be approved by Congress only in late January.

"We tried our best," said Gonzales as he shrugged off questions on whether the controversy involving Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez that has preoccupied the House this week may have contributed to the delay in the approval of the budget.

Jimenez delivered a privilege speech last Monday accusing Justice Secretary Hernando Perez of allegedly extorting $2 million from him. His speech prompted two other House members to deliver privilege speeches last week at a time when the chamber was deep into deliberations on the 2003 budget.

But Gonzales explained that the budget of many large departments and agencies were not approved right away because legislators were questioning them on the commitments that they had made earlier.

Still to be passed are the budgets of the agriculture, agrarian reform, education, transportation and communication, national defense, health, public works and highways and environment and natural resources departments, among others.

Gonzales also said the House had taken a "relaxed pace" as the members realized earlier on that Congress would not be able to approve the budget on time.

GMA forms new unit to run after smugglers

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday announced the establishment of an anti-smuggling intelligence and investigation center that will go after smugglers operating outside the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Customs.

President Macapagal appointed retired police general Miguel Coronel to head the new unit.

Citing the budget deficit as a "concern" of her administration, the President said that Coronel will work closely with Commissioner Guillermo Parayno of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

"With their combined efforts, the goal is to increase tax and customs revenues to reduce the deficit and the interest rates that you the exporters have to pay," Ms Macapagal said in a speech in Malacañang during the 2002 Golden Shell Awards honoring the country's top exporters.

The President described Coronel as a "very reputable man with a sterling reputation for integrity."

Coronel formerly headed the Dangerous Drugs Board and the Camp Crame-based National Drug Enforcement and Prevention Coordinating Center.

Coronel and Parayno are members of Class 1970 of the Philippine Military Academy. They are classmates of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Dionisio Santiago and Police Director Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr.

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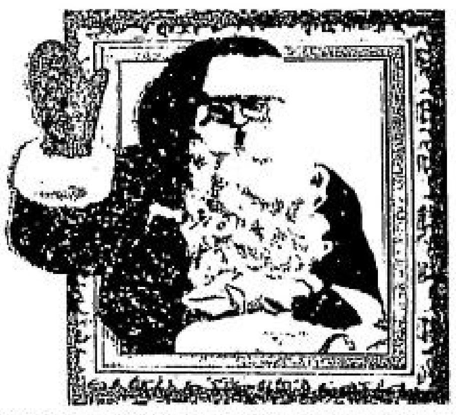

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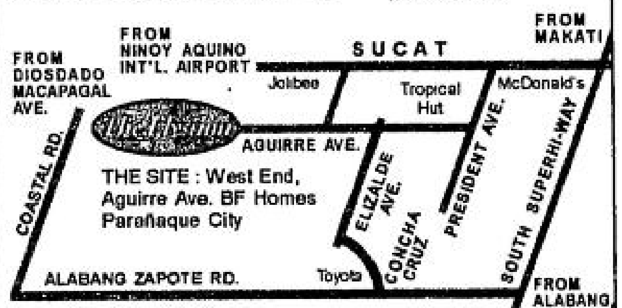

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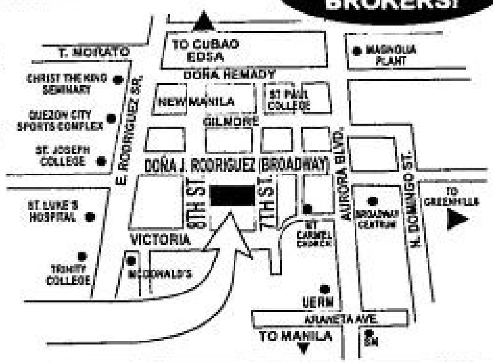

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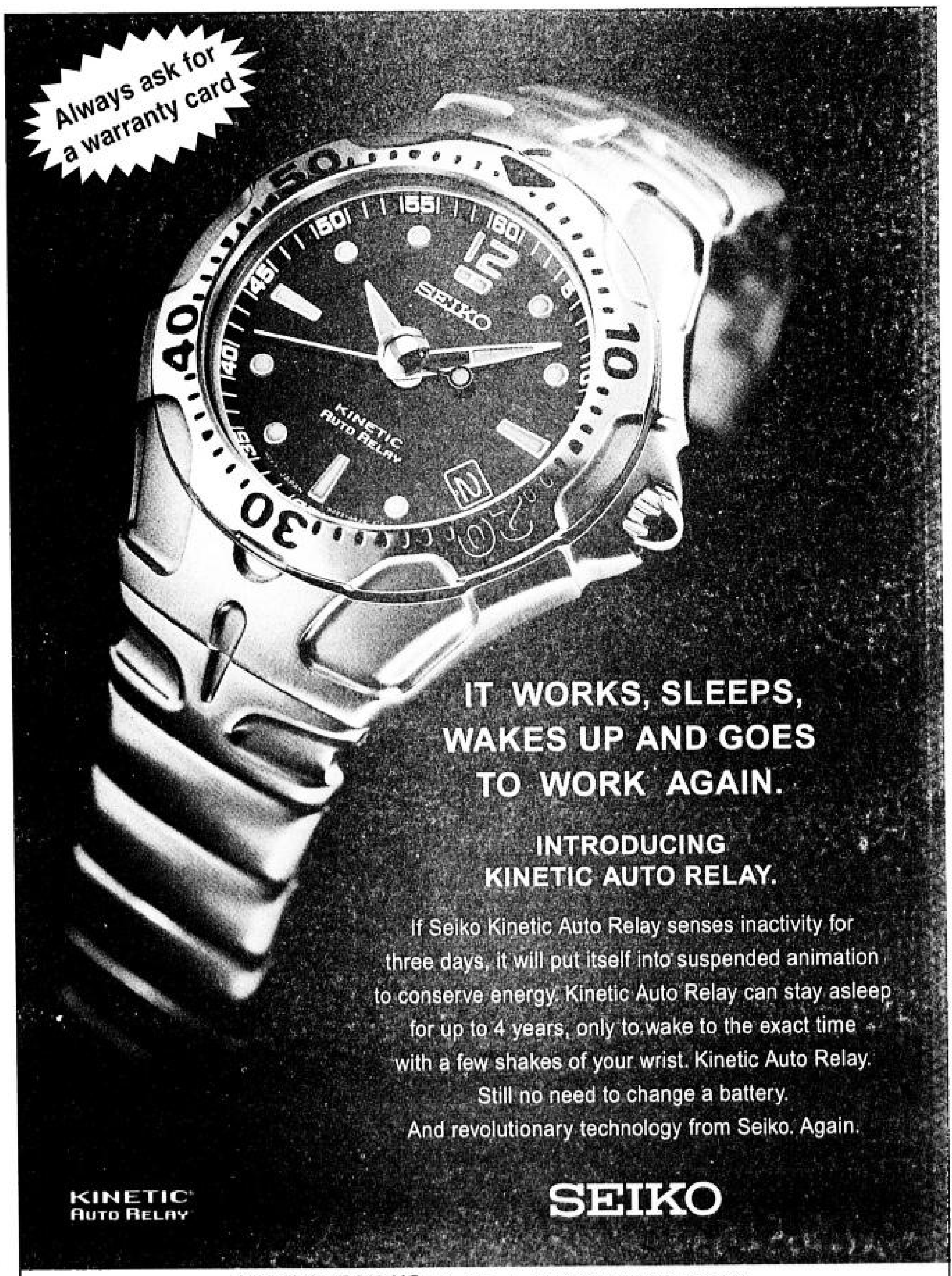

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OPINION

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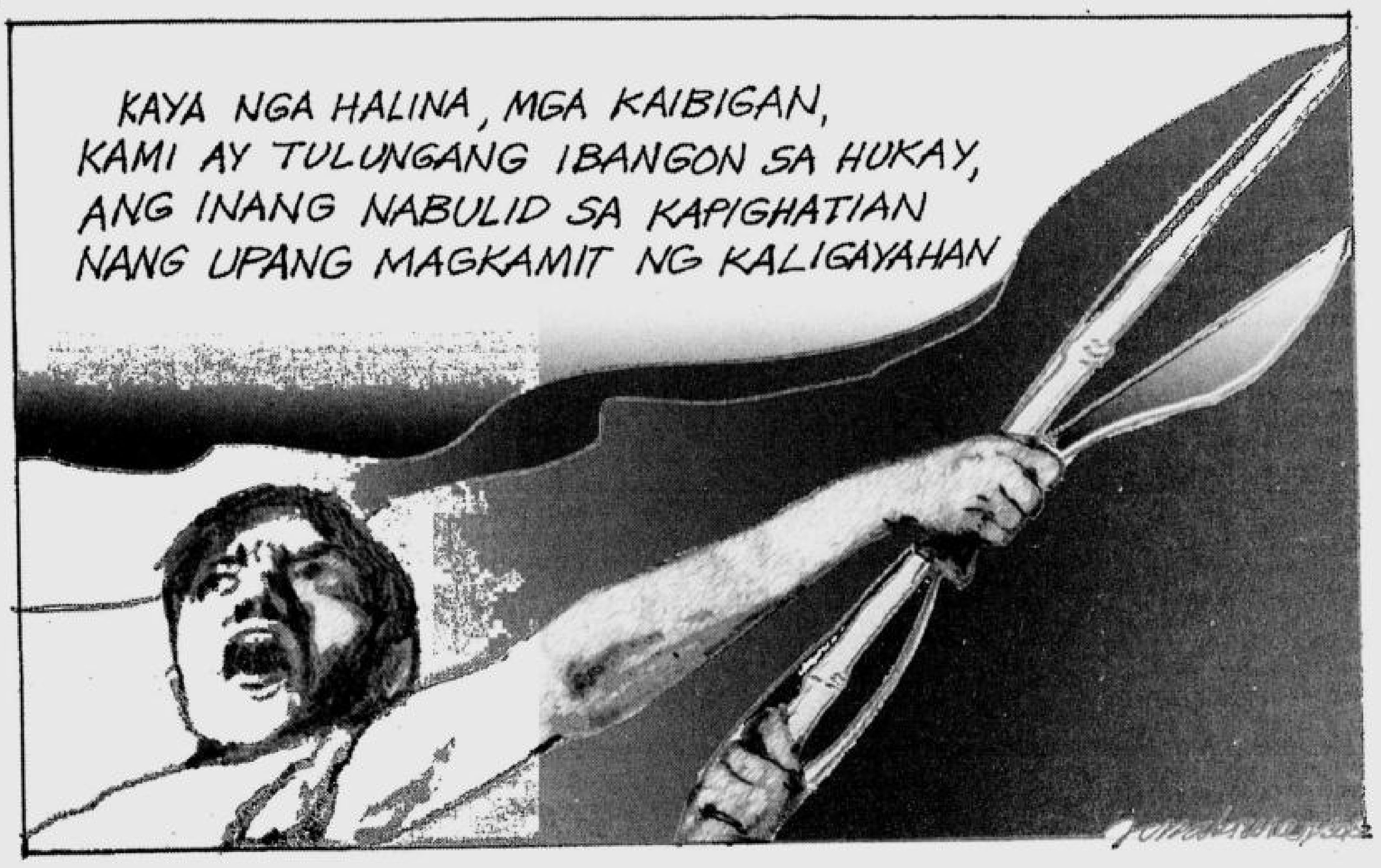
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Extreme reaction

EDITORIAL

THREE foreign embassies—those of Australia, Canada and the European Union—have temporarily shut their offices after receiving intelligence reports about possible terrorist attacks by Islamic extremists. Australia and Canada cited "explicit" and "credible" threats of terrorist attacks and have warned their nationals against travelling to the Philippines. Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said his government had received information from "sources in the Philippines" about the planned attack and Australian Prime Minister John Howard seconded it by saying: "I saw the intelligence warning and it couldn't have been more explicit."

If the Australian government swears by the "explicit" and "credible" threat of attack, they have not shared their intelligence with Philippine authorities, making their decision unilateral and even alarming. Although the Australians are jittery because, after all, more than a hundred Australian holiday makers were killed in the terrorist bombing in Bali, Indonesia, their failure to share information with Philippine authorities makes it doubly hard to secure the premises of their embassy.

The information, which they keep to themselves, was contagious. On the same day, the European Union mission, whose offices are in the same building as the Australian embassy, was unnerved and followed the Australian lead. But it is more difficult to understand why the Canadian embassy, whose offices are a few blocks away from the Australian embassy, developed a similar nervousness.

If the embassies keep to themselves their information considering security problems, then they cannot expect the Philippine government to take measures to protect them. The unilateral closure of these embassies is without precedent. It is a knee-jerk, if not irrational, response to security problems. The failure to share sensitive information with local authorities precludes them from providing adequate security measures.

Withholding intelligence information is also a slap on the face of local authorities. It implies that local authorities cannot be trusted to provide security because they are incompetent.

While the Australian embassy's extreme reaction was obviously influenced by the bombing in Bali, the Canadian embassy's move is more difficult to explain. Canada and Canadian citizens have not been attacked by terrorists. Canada has done nothing that Islamic terrorists would find especially offensive as to warrant an attack on its embassy in Manila.

Neither is it clear why terrorists, responding to the US led international campaign against the US-led war on terrorism, should pick these embassies in Manila for retaliation. What's so especial about Manila or what impact will attacks in Manila have that would advance in any way their worldwide campaign? In other words, why would they launch an attack on the Australian embassy in Manila instead of hitting targets in Australia, where such attacks will have a stronger political impact?

The closure of the embassies come at a most unwelcome time for the government. It signals a lack of confidence in the capacity of the government to secure the lives and property of foreigners in the face of the growing threat of international terrorism. And it comes at a time when the government is reeling from a huge deficit and amidst allegations of extortion leveled against the secretary of justice.

The unilateral closure of these embassies is a big blow to the the tourism industry and the country's efforts to attract foreign investment. Terrorist attacks, beginning with the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping for ransom, have already left the tourist industry in tatters. The new terrorist jitters are enough to shatter the dreams of Tourism Secretary Dick Gordon to spark a revival of tourism and to stop whatever meager investment is trickling into the Philippines.

Whatever the source of the reports about "credible threats" of terrorist attacks, it would be useful for Philippine authorities to find out if these attacks are supposed to be carried out by home-grown terrorists or foreign ones. It is entirely possible that their investigations would show that such threats were concocted by groups that are trying to destabilize the administration by stirring up popular fear and anxiety.

Patriots

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

TODAY is Bonifacio Day. On this day, the nation pauses to recall with reverence and gratitude the heroes of our race who transformed us from a motley group of islands into one compact entity known as the Republic of the Philippines. High among their leaders was the *supremo* of the Katipunan.

The inhabitants of our archipelago were originally members of separate tribes connected mainly by commercial ties based on their various needs for food and other commodities. Each unit was independent although there were occasional alliances, usually for common defense or as a result of marital unions. But there was no feeling of being part of a political system encompassing all the tribes in an all-inclusive society.

It was left to the Spaniards to impress upon the *indios* that they belonged no longer to their separate tribes but to one unitary political entity under the rule of the foreign power. The traditional native kingdoms were gradually and eventually dismantled to accept the powerful intruders from across the seas and recognize the government they had established in the name of their distant monarch.

Ironically, the efforts of Spain to transform the 7,000 or so islands of our archipelago into a compact political unit proved to be the invader's undoing. The reason was its policy of oppression that kept the masses in ignorance, debased their inherent rights as human beings, abused their womenfolk, and permitted the friars to interfere with the civil administration with their threats of fire and brimstone on their impressionable flock.

There were sporadic revolts against the local tyranny, but none of them succeeded in igniting widespread resentment against the colonial master. These isolated movements failed to dislodge the foreign rulers from their secure and apparently impregnable pinnacles of power. Castilian arrogance made them believe that the docile colony could be kept in perpetual bondage because it would never have the courage to resist them.

Little did they realize, at least at first, that there were forces among the people that were secretly conspiring to redeem their lost liberties. The rise of an educated middle class contributed to the desire, and later the demand, for peaceful reform. The execution of Burgos, Gomez and Zamora added to the smoldering resentments of the natives. The works of Rizal, Del Pilar, Lopez Jaena and other propagandists fueled the boiling anger. And there was Andres Bonifacio in the secret precincts of the Katipunan planning the Revolution that would prove the mettle of the Filipino hero.

That hero was in every Filipino who dared to challenge the might and right of Spain to rule the country. He was in Rizal writing the "Noli" and the "Fili" and his Ultimo Adios before meeting his martyrdom in a hail of bullets. He was in Bonifacio tearing his cedula and proclaiming his country's freedom at Pugad Lawin. He was in every single one of his followers who boldly brandished their bolos against the haughty cannon of the Spanish forces that sent many of them to a glorious but anonymous death.

The trespass of another foreign power demanded the sacrifice of more heroes during the Philippine-American war that the new imperialist belittled as a mere insurrection. Aguinaldo led the First Philippine Republic that died a-borning in 1898. The 23-year-old Gen. Gregorio de Pilar achieved his immortality at Tirad Pass. Decades later, we were embroiled in a war not of our own making and found ourselves under the heel of another invader. The Japanese occupation also inspired the heroism of the Filipino and brought glory to Jose Abad Santos, who chose death rather than submission, and to Wenceslao Vinzons and thousands of guerrillas like him in the defiant mountains.

We tend to assign heroism to military figures, forgetting that men of peace have also proved their right to share that virtue. Rizal was our champion in the arena of the mind where he proved that the incisive word was sharper than the sword. Quezon and Osmeña led our demand for independence during the American regime, and Laurel protected us, at risk to his own life, from the Japanese intruder. And let us not forget Ninoy Aquino, the nemesis of despotism, whose assassination provoked the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship and reinstated our usurped democracy.

In fact, even ordinary men and women can be heroes. The parent who rears his children to be good citizens, the teacher who widens the reaches of the students' minds, the lowly government clerk who does his work efficiently and honestly, the farmer sowing the seeds to feed the nation, the laborer churning the wheels of industrial progress, and the intelligent voter who exercises his suffrage not for personal advantage but the nation's benefit—these and many men and women like them are also heroes. And we celebrate their greatness too on this reverent occasion.

In doing so, let us pay special tribute to the patriot to whom this day is dedicated. It was Andres Bonifacio who, while others slept, shouted that cry for freedom that crumbled the bastion of Spanish tyranny.

Erap today

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

FORMER President Erap Estrada may be suffering because of his incarceration, but there certainly is no physical evidence of it. In fact, when I saw him earlier this week for an interview on GMA-7's "Debate," he looked better than I had ever seen him. Gone were any signs of dissipation—his eyes no longer puffy, his speech no longer slurred.

He looked so much younger than his 65 years, that I was compelled to ask him if he had had anything done to his face. He denied this vigorously, visibly pleased at the compliment. His secret? "Clean living" and "prayer."

Erap divulged that he was able to give up smoking for 11 months (no mean feat) and, although he has taken up the habit again, the respite seems to have done wonders for his complexion, because the enlarged pores that mark a smoker seem to have disappeared. (He modestly said it was the makeup, but the last time I met him face to face, he was also made up for the cameras.) Moreover, the cumulative effect of the enforced rest he is getting (the hospital atmosphere is not conducive to the carousing that reputedly marked his previous way of life) has become evident in his appearance.

His relaxed look may also be attributable to the fact that he is no longer in intense pain from his knee problem. This pain relief he attributes to the power of prayer: a Sister "Glo" (of was it the Mother Ignacia Convent?) recently prayed over him for over two hours. After that prayer session, said the former President, the pain in his knees that he has been living with for so long, has been markedly reduced, if not totally removed.

Does that mean he will no longer have to undergo an operation? asked my TV partner, Oscar Orbos. Erap wanted to keep his options open. We shall see, he answered.

Erap seemed to be in excellent spirits during the visit, and his wit and humor showed throughout the conversation, with himself as the butt more often than not. On camera, when Oscar and I told him that "Debate" was celebrating its fourth anniversary, he remarked: "*Mabuti pa kayo, naka* fourth anniversary... *Ako dalawang taon lang.*" (Free translation: Good for you: You have reached your fourth anniversary. I lasted only two years.) His laughter was as hearty as everyone else's.

Then there was the naughty question posed: President Macapagal-Arroyo says she has "plenty" with regard to her sex life. What about you?

The answer, again with a self-deprecating grin: "Very few."

It is obvious that he follows the news keenly, probably more than he ever did as a sitting president, now that he has all the time on his hands. The TV set which is in his room (I don't know if it is there permanently or was transferred from the living room to make way for the cameras) looks like a 29-inch set. And while he tries very hard not to gloat, the scandals rocking the incumbent administration seem to give him a great deal of consolation.

He took to occasion to try to set the record straight, at least according to his lights, on the performance of his administration. I don't know whether he does this to all his guests, but with me, he was ready with a set of (colored) graphs to make his point.

One that he dwelt on at length, showed the number of IPP contracts signed in each of the four post-Marcos administrations, and the purpose of this illustration was to point out that during his watch, no IPP contracts were signed. This was because, he said, he refused to sign anything that would require a government guarantee, in this particular case the Impsa contract, even if the Argentine president and he had exchanged visits, and he was royally treated in Impsa's home base. Mark Jimenez, he continued, repeating previous statements, waved a $14-million kickback in front of him, but he refused to take the bait.

It is clear that Jimenez is in Erap's black book; he has been there since at least six months before Erap's ouster. Why? I asked.

Because, said the former president, he was dropping my name, unauthorized, in his wheeling and dealing, and I got wind of it. Erap said he has had no contact with Jimenez since their falling out, and the latter has not tried to visit him at the Veterans Memorial Hospital.

Another graph showed economic growth rates again under each of the four post-Marcos presidents, and Erap pointed to the dip at the beginning of his regime, and the recovery he was able to engineer.

His memory about his administration tends to be selective. Kidnapping, he said, was practically wiped out during his time (the Philippine Statistical Yearbook carries no figures on kidnapping, but it shows that the Total Crime Rate in the Philippines went up markedly in 1999). It was the demonstrations, not anything he did, that caused the economy to slide downwards. As to the fact that poverty incidence increased between 1997 and 2000, he had very little to say about it.

And he is emphatic about two things: One is that he never broke the covenant he made with the people during his inauguration that he would favor neither friends nor relatives (*walang kaibigan, walang kumpare, walang kamaganak*). The other, which he will probably repeat until his dying day, is that he never stole a single centavo of public money.

Is he sincere in his belief, or just a good actor delivering his lines?

That's for the Sandiganbayan to decide. In the meantime, Oscar was charmed.

Let's prove our country is safe from terrorism

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

WE Filipinos shouldn't feel offended that the Australian, Canadian and European Union embassies have decided to temporarily close because of intelligence reports that they could be the target of terrorist attacks within a specific time frame. This has happened in other cities abroad.

Recall that US President Bush ordered the US Embassy in Jakarta closed last September due to reports of threats. The Western schools in Jakarta were also closed for some weeks earlier this month because of similar threats and only reopened recently. Travel advisories were also issued by foreign governments on even more stable countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia. Then, too, the recent firing of missiles at an Israeli chartered plane in Africa opens a new frontier of terrorism altogether.

* * *

The fact is that the foreign missions will act according to their national interest first. What the Philippines and other Asian countries must do is convince the Western countries that our region is safe from terrorist attacks. It is obvious that their level of confidence in our region is quite low. This requires greater vigilance, more hard work and A-1 intelligence, and the cooperation of all citizens.

* * *

For some years now, Senate President Franklin Drilon has made it a tradition to celebrate his birthday at Club Filipino with friends, relatives and admirers, with his wife Mila and children by his side. Last Thursday evening, he turned 57 and President Macapagal-Arroyo, Vice President Guingona, Speaker De Venecia and many other leaders were around, though Guingona left for a speaking engagement before GMA arrived. At the party the thoughts of some friends turned to Sen. Rene Cayetano, who was supposed to take over the Senate presidency at around this time. Cayetano, however, is confined for a liver ailment at a hospital in Los Angeles. My family joins Rene's many friends in praying for his speedy recovery.

For the moment, it seems that Drilon will keep his post, and he has the support of the opposition.

We hope that the stability of leadership in the Senate will lead to more productive work. Several crucial bills already passed by the House remain pending in the Senate because of the frightful divisions in the past. These bills, especially the Special Asset Purpose Vehicle (SPAV) bill, the Transco bill and the Securitization Act, are crucial as they will result in the infusion of many billions in equity capital into the economy.

* * *

Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama, who has been in the eye of the storm involving Rep. Mark Jimenez and Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, called to stress a number of things. One is that MJ's second wife Carol is not his first cousin, as I had written. The wife of his first cousin is the sister of Carol Jimenez. Villarama said his family is actually closer to the Escalers on his mother's side, the Buysons of Bulacan. In fact, his 82-year-old mother is quite upset over all the things he has said that involved Ernest Escaler. But Villarama stressed that his only aim in exposing the MJ case was to ferret out the truth, and now he thinks that the only way to do this is for government to ask Coutts Bank to open the account.

* * *

The bill authored by Senators Loren Legarda and Edgardo Angara seeking to abolish the Preparatory Recall Assembly (PRA) as a mechanism for initiating recall elections against local officials was unanimously passed on third reading in the Senate, but it still has to be passed by the House. Note that the PRA provision was inserted into the Local Government Code of 1991 by the House during the bicameral conference committee. In the Senate version the only way to initiate recall was through a 25-percent vote of all registered voters of a town or city. Now with recall cases sprouting, the House is under tremendous pressure to rectify its earlier mistake.

* * *

During last week's Senate deliberations on the PRA, Antique Gov. Sally Zaldivar Perez, who used to be the Palace liaison with the Senate before she ran for governor in 2001, keenly followed the proceedings. With reason, for she herself is the subject of recall initiated by followers of her rival, Rep. Exequiel Javier. Others facing recall are Cebu Mayor Tommy Osmena, Catanduanes Gov. Leandro Verceles and Taguig Mayor Sigfrido Tinga. When a key amendment of the approved Senate bill sought to dismiss all pending recall cases (through the PRA), the irrepressible Sen. John Osmeña promptly labelled it the "Sally Perez amendment." Interestingly, the House seems almost unanimous in doing away with the PRA; in the committee deliberations only Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano (who sought to recall Tinga) and Javier were in favor of the PRA. At Drilon's party, Perez asked De Venecia where he stands and he said, "The PRA has to go. It is a tool for political vendetta."

* * *

Doubtless, a big factor that influenced Congress to move for the abolition of the PRA has been the consistent stand of Chief Justice Hilario Davide since 1993, when Gov. Enrique Garcia of Bataan was subjected to recall by his political opponent. Davide holds that the PRA provision in the Code is unconstitutional. In his dissenting opinion on the eligibility of Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn to run for what is in effect his fourth term, Davide noted that the president of the Association of Barangay Captains is Mark David M. Hagedorn, who was designated by the PRA as its interim chair. Allowing the mayor to run for a fourth term, said the Chief Justice is unconstitutional, and so is the PRA as a recall mechanism.

A small town in Bohol

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SAN MIGUEL is a fourth-class municipality in Bohol, about two hours' drive from Tagbilaran. It has a population of 21,413, with average family income of P3,500 a month.

The town center lies on both sides of the highway, a sparse collection of buildings and homes, but most of its residents live in 18 fairly isolated *barangays* accessible only by muddy trails. It is not, by most estimates, a wealthy town. But with other towns in Bohol, San Miguel is blazing trails on the marshalling of political will and local resources for the prioritization of primary health care programs, and the integration of reproductive health services into such programs.

Mayor Silvino Evangelista met our group, composed mostly of local government executives from Bicol and Palawan, to brief us on his town and provide the background for San Miguel's pioneering primary health care program. Briefly, it boils down to political will, on the part of both local officials and residents, and the energy and dedication of a corps of health workers and managers.

Dr. Hamilcar Saniel, the municipal health officer, recounts that when the devolution of health services was announced in 1992, just a year after he was assigned to the town, he and other MHOs in Bohol were apprehensive, feeling orphaned, since they were now no longer under the wings of the Department of Health but left to seemingly fend for themselves under the uncertain patronage of their local governments.

But Dr. Saniel and other MHOs belonging to the Bohol chapter of the Association of Municipal Health Officers of the Philippines (AMHOP) also began to see devolution as an opportunity more than a threat. "It was a chance for us to come up with our own innovative programs," said Dr. Saniel. "If local officials see that you're sincere and you take the time to make your programs known to them," he added, then there should be no problem with getting all the support you need.

* * *

ASIDE from winning the support of local officials, though, Dr. Saniel says it is equally important "to have the support of ordinary people," to let the town residents feel as committed, and invested in the concept of a healthy community. This way, health initiatives and programs are assured of continuity and sustainability, no matter that administrations come and go.

It is also important, said Dr. Saniel in reply to my question if he truly believes that "good health is good politics," that local politicians do not perceive their local health officials as possible threats. "I have no political aspirations, and they can see that. I hail from Tagbilaran and I have not changed my place of registration, so it's clear to the officials that I have no intention of running for office."

In San Miguel, Dr. Saniel worked closely with the local health board, the highest health policymaking body in the town, chaired by the mayor, with Dr. Saniel as vice chair, with equal representation from the local council and the local community. Even before he embarked on his various health projects, Dr. Saniel went about "building" a constituency for them, holding orientation and advocacy seminars for town officials, local legislators, *barangay* officials, *barangay* health workers and even *hilots* or traditional birth attendants.

* * *

AT THE SAME time, setting a template that has since been followed by other municipalities, Dr. Saniel's team set about mobilizing what he calls "partner volunteers." They organized *barangay* health councilors into the Confederated Health Councilors Association and formed the "*hilot*" association, federation of barangay health workers, the Botica Aides Association, and worked among the *barangay tanods*, day-care workers, women volunteers and youth volunteers.

With the community supporting and indeed advocating for a comprehensive and responsive health program, San Miguel's local government really had no choice then but to implement the projects and prioritize funding for them.

As San Miguel officials pointed out, even a fourth-class municipality can find the money to build a municipal hospital if the officials truly believe there's need for it, and if the people clamor long and hard enough for it.

The "municipal infirmary" of San Miguel, said Mayor Silvino, was established because, living so far from the capital, the people felt the need for a nearby facility they could run to in case of serious illnesses. The need for such a facility was dramatized in 1994, recalled Dr. Saniel, when there was an outbreak of diarrhea in the town and they had to house the patients in various government buildings. With an allocation from the town's Internal Revenue Allotment, the municipal infirmary was constructed on a small building abandoned by the Department of Public Works and Highways. Early on, Dr. Saniel had to divide his time between the municipal health office and the infirmary. Today the infirmary is run by a separate staff, with someone from the municipal treasurer's office holding office in the infirmary, thus freeing the medical staff from having to collect fees from patients.

* * *

IN 1997, having heard about the San Miguel experience, officials of the Ford Foundation came visiting and afterwards offered funding for a "capacity-building" project on the integration of reproductive health services into the comprehensive health program. The project has since been expanded from San Miguel to four other towns in Bohol: Calape, Dauis, Luay and Dagohoy.

Dr. Saniel stressed that Ford Foundation came in only after the program was off and running. As Remmy Rikken of Women in Politics Insitute put it: "If you have a good program, money will come."

Exposicion Regional Filipina 1895

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

THE 23RD of January 1895 saw the opening of the first regional exposition in the Philippines under the supervision of D. Angel Aviles, director general of the civil administration. Inventories of the items—unlike the items on exhibit—have managed to survive termites, wars and even human depredations.

I specifically selected Section 6, Fine Arts, Group I—paintings, studies, oil, water color, pastel, pencil drawings, crayon (carbon), and further chose certain names, especially provincial ones, on the off chance that some paintings by these artists might still exist. Some artists' names were selected simply because they might ring bells and someone might remember a painting long forgotten.

Equally intriguing were works lent for exhibit by certain collectors or owners: D. Ramon Blanco, "Dolorosa," oil, painted by Borrell; D. Francisco Chavarri, "San Francisco," antique oil painting; Fr. Paulino Camba, "Dolorosa," another antique oil painting; Manuel Roxas, "La Virgen, Jesus y San Juan," oil by Felipe Roxas, and two landscapes in oil by Carmen Zaragoza. The governor of Cebu sent an oil by Francisco de Sales entitled, "Los Extremos se tocan." Agustin Montilla lent two drawings by Concepcion Montilla; Mariano Molo, Paz Paterno's "Paisaje," oil; Maximino Paterno, Paz's Paterno's "Orillas del Pasig," oil. Paz Paterno was further represented by three oil paintings with the same title of "Bodegon" (meaning, still life)—one owned by Trinidad Paterno de Vera, another by D. Antonio Paterno, and the third by D. Feliciano Paterno Ignacio. The sad part is that no measurements are given. It would be interesting to find out how many of these survived the Liberation.

D. Manuel Iriarte lent Francisco Goya's "Retrato de una Señora," oil, and four studies by the same painter; "Eva" by Francisco Ortega," oil; "Resurreccion Hidalgo's "Antigona y Edipo," "Marina de Paris," "Napolitana" (a study head), "Viejo," "Virgenes Cristianas expuestas al populacio," El Violinista," "Adios a la Aldea," "Cercanas de Paris," Dr. Petrona Nakpil lent two oil paintings: "Dos paletas" and "Paisaje" by D. Ana Capili.

Museo Biblioteca de Filipinas under Director Pedro Paterno lent Lorenzo Rocha's "La Fragua de Vulcano," copy in oil; "Aquiles Herido" oil by Esteban Villanueva; Felix R. Hidalgo's "Un Religioso" and D. T. Sucgang's "Dido a la Orilla del Mar," oil.

Here are some provincial artists: from Magaldan, Pangasinan, Rafaela Callanta, "Frutero," oil; from Bacolor, Pampanga, Simon Flores y Roxas, "La Expulsion," fantasy in oil; from Dingras, Ilocos Norte. Lucas Jiron, "Retrato," pencil drawing, and "Paisaje," oil. From San Fernando, Pampanga, Mariano Henson, "Agradecimiento," allegory oil: from Iloilo, Telesforo Sucgang, "Retrato," a portrait of the artist and his wife in oil; from Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Olimpia S. Teran de Abella, "Paisaje," guache on kidskin; from Angono, Rizal, Juan Senson, "Vista Parcial del Pueblo de Angono y Laguna de Bay," oil; from Cebu, Francisco Sales, "Paisaje," watercolor; from Iligan, Jose Taviel de Andrade, "Recuerdo de la Campaña de Mindanao de 1895," oil.

You could also start looking for photographs by Felix Laureano. From Barcelona, Jose Zaragoza lent 37 of them, "Recuerdos de Filipinas" and 11 were from Miguel Zaragoza..

Given that, not much of the images inside the chapels, convents and churches of Intramuros were saved, any of the following Manila sculptors could have been represented. Perhaps some of the old families of Manila or other places might still have some of their works. These were carvers in wood: Jose Alejo and Bonifacio Arevalo, Pedro Claudio, Eulogio and Ambrosio Garcia, Ciriaco Guadinez, Eugenio Llerena, Rosendo Martinez, Agripino Martel, Marcelo Nepomuceno, Manuel Flores (who did an Immaculate Conception lent by the Capuchins for the exhibit), Apolinar Toribio, Martin Terran, Domingo Teotico(bust of Jose Jimeno on a pedestal carved with native shrubs), and Licerio Villareal.

Jorge Barlin (the name is still known) from Sorsogon did one of San Geronimo using the medulla or pith of a plant called *borboron*. Another interesting item was a bust of Manuel Clemente in bronze by Mercader y Font, cast by D. M. Nakpil.

Could the following still exist here or in Spain?

- Jose Asuncion: 4 landscapes, oil. 1 portrait, 8 religious paintings.
- Domingo Alvarez: 2 pencil drawings of a head.
- Santiago Barruel: oil painting of Srta. D. J. M.
- Teodoro Buenaventura: "Despues del baño," oil, a study of a head, a study of a native.
- D. Doroteo Vicente Austria: "Infancia," pen and ink drawing.
- Manual Espiritu: "De la Compra," oil; "Un Percance Desgraciado," oil.
- Vicente Avelino: "Mesa Revuelta," calligraphic drawing.
- Balbino Florentino: "Landscape," oil.
- Mercedes Wiergo: "Estudio de Flores," both of them oil.
- Luciana Garces: "Mesa Revuelta," 2 oil paintings.
- Jose de la Guardia, "Un tambor de Alabarderos," acuarela.
- Adolfo Ocon: "Maria," oil portrait.
- Ana Garcia Planas: "Bodegon," oil and 3 oil copies of Oleographias.
- Jose Hernandez: "Puerta del Sol," oil landscape.
- Maria del Rosario: "Distracciones Literarias," "Desastres de un Ciclon," and "Paisaje," oil.
- Laureano Layoc: "Tipos del Pais," oil.

Second chance

YOUNG BLOOD

A.F.B.

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I WAS far from being a typical teenager. I was very goal-oriented, very independent, extremely receptive—and very sickly. I had asthma since I was 2 years old. Every year I was confined for weeks in a hospital, but it never kept me from enjoying life to the full and sucking it down to its marrow.

What really set me apart from other kids was that I got what I wanted when I wanted it. No, I wasn't spoiled; I just set a goal, gave myself a deadline and simply went for it. For instance, when I enrolled in a school for self-defense, my parents disapproved (though they came to accept it later), and in one and a half years, I earned the highest belt.

Stubborn as a mule though gentle as a lamb, I have never learned the meaning of the word "quit." If things don't go the way I plan them, I do them all over again because I don't believe in failure; I consider them as temporary setbacks.

I started to commit myself to the service of the Lord by lending my voice to our school choir when I was still in high school. Later I took charge of the youth choir. Some people thought it rather odd that while other girls my age were partying, attending soirees and dating, I was teaching the youth to play the guitar, piano and flute for our choir. To me it didn't matter if my social life was on hold because I loved doing what I was doing. And I still found time to participate in other church activities like teaching art and music to children. Everything I did, I offered to God.

When I was in college, I was elected to the second highest position in the student council. People knew me and admired the work I was doing for the school and for the students. I was so active that I hardly had time to sit down. I joined as many organizations as possible and spearheaded many major activities despite my already hectic schedule. I was considered one those students most likely to succeed in the real world, but destiny didn't quite agree.

The moment I graduated, I wanted to proceed to law school. So when I was admitted to one of the country's finest law schools, I was ecstatic. My childhood dream of following in the footsteps of my father was slowly coming true.

But as I said, fate had other plans for me. During my third year in law school, I got pregnant. It seemed harmless at first since I was of age and I could still finish my studies. I thought wrong.

Afraid of their reaction, I didn't inform my parents about my condition. I thought I could handle the situation on my own. And that was my biggest mistake.

While eating lunch with my family one Sunday afternoon, I had an asthma attack. As I gasped for air, some food went into my lungs, suffocating me.

My parents rushed me to the nearest hospital, which was 20 minutes from our house. I was clinically dead when we reached the hospital. The doctors were able to revive me, but I had suffered massive brain damage. I was in a coma for a very long time, suffering multiple seizures and running a very high fever.

A friend told my parents that I might be pregnant. They were shocked to learn I was two months pregnant.

The doctors were careful in giving me medication so as not to harm the baby. But they also more than hinted that I could go any time.

My mother refused to believe such talk. She knew I was a fighter and was convinced I would pull through. One day she whispered a promise in my ear, "If you wake up now, I will buy you a Nokia 3210."

Funny or shallow as it may seem, I woke up after eight and a half weeks of sleeping.

I can remember seeing faces and hearing voices without recognizing anyone or understanding anything. People were looking at me. Some were crying, others had smiles on their faces. But as to who they were, I had no clue.

I would drift in and out of sleep, my parents now tell me. They would talk to me, and I would hear them but I couldn't understand what they were saying. When I tried to speak no sound came out of my mouth.

When at last I regained my consciousness, the doctors said my mental age was that of a four-year old. They could not say if I would ever recover fully.

It was a long, painful wait for family and friends, but being pigheaded like I was, I returned to my normal state of mind.

I wasn't the same though. I could not sit on my own, my hands were balled into fists, and my feet were permanently on tiptoes. There were times when I'd go blind. I couldn't speak and the only sound I could make was a moan. I cried a lot out of frustration, but no sound came out of my mouth. It felt like I had been gagged. I was like a child, learning everything all over again, from chewing, swallowing and even breathing because I was fed through my nose.

I had to go through two major surgeries. First, on both hands so that I could make use of them, and then on my feet so that I could walk.

Both operations were very successful. Now I can write and I can walk with a cane.

When I finally found my voice, it was soft and low and my speech was slurred. One of the first things I asked my mom was how my brother and sister were doing. I had this terrible thought that we were involved in an accident: I was driving fast, lost control of the car and went under a 16-wheeler truck.

My mom told me there was no car accident, but I had a severe asthma attack and I was pregnant. I cried because I didn't want a baby in my condition and because I had hurt my family and my friends badly.

But ultimately I had to accept the fact that I was going to be a disabled, single mom. Then I told myself I had to be strong because God had a greater purpose for me, otherwise He would have had already taken me.

I spent two months in intensive care and I stayed another month for physical therapy. Then I was out of the hospital.

This experience turned my world completely. They say miracles happen to those who have great faith in the Lord. This faith saved my child and me.

I am blessed to have a very supportive family and loving friends who helped me through my pregnancy and my surgeries. Now people look up to me, and some say they get some strength from my own experience. I have served as inspiration to those who were close to giving up.

To me trials are not reasons to give up but challenges to overcome and thereby improve ourselves. I survived the tragedy and my smart, healthy and beautiful daughter will be turning two this December.

Forrest Gump said, "Life's a box of chocolates—you never know what you're gonna get." My life has been one big box of chocolates, with lots of surprises and two miracles. God has given me a second chance to suck life down to its marrow.

A.F.B. is 25 years old.

Docs helping sabotage anti-AIDS campaign

WORLD AIDS Day comes on Dec. 1. Last year, it came and went almost unnoticed in Manila. I noted only four small gatherings, compared to over 20 in Sydney, Australia, which is a much smaller city.

Australia is reducing the AIDS rate while the Philippines doesn't have a clear idea of its extent. If this is not true, let the Department of Health reply, and also explain why it failed to answer polite letters I sent to it inquiring about the subject months ago.

So, there will be no more marches in Makati as the staunch anti-AIDS campaigner Dr. Juan M. Flavier (now a senator) has gotten nearly zero support from the 24,000 doctors belonging to the Philippine Medical Association (PMA). They condemn their patients to death by condoning by their silence the sabotage of the anti-AIDS campaign.

—EARL K. WILKINSON,
Makati City

Impostor selling fake CSC certificates

THIS refers to the news report in the Across the Nation section last Nov. 11, entitled "Agents hunt head of fake civil service certificates."

The report regarding the "hunt" for Bella Mitra, alleged head of a syndicate said to be selling fake civil service eligibility certificates does not involve my wife, Bella Altura Mitra, supervising personnel specialist of National Capital Region office of the Civil Service Commission. She has been a CSC employee since 1975 and has an exemplary record. She is not the "Bella Mitra" mentioned in your report.

Obviously, the writer did not verify the information given and as a result maligned my wife and cast dishonor on our family. The fourth paragraph of the report narrated in detail the "operation" of the person identified as "Bella Mitra," quoting Anicia Marasigan-De Lima, director of the Civil Service Commission in Central Luzon. In her haste, your correspondent failed to note that De Lima had submitted a report to CSC chair Karina Constantino-David on the incident. She concluded, together with several witnesses, that the "Bella Mitra" in your article was an impostor.

You erred and neglected to check your facts after quoting De Lima. Was De Lima interviewed for the article or was she not?

—ANDY A. MITRA, 38 Tirad Pass St.,
Phase 3, Pacita Complex 1, San Pedro,
Laguna

My story was based on an interview with the CSC regional director, Anicia Marasigan-De Lima, and on a press release issued by her office. Both categorically stated that the "Bella Mitra" being mentioned was an impostor. The real Bella Altura Mitra was actually working at the CSC-NCR office, De Lima said. CSC posters said the same thing about the impostor. I did not refer to the real Bella Altura Mitra as the suspect in my story nor did I mention her position in the CSC-NCR. Since this was a criminal case, I was cautious not to identify the suspect as an impostor since the complaint did not identify her as such. —TONETTE OREJAS, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Where is the Senate report on narcopolitics?

HAVE the distinguished senators of our Republic lost their courage to fight for righteousness and justice by preventing narcopolitics from gaining a foothold in our political system?

I ask this question because many months ago, joint committee hearings of the ethics committee and the committee on illegal drugs were held to determine how deeply narcopolitics has taken hold of our political system. Mary "Rosebud" Ong and Ador Manaway, among others, testified during those hearings.

From my 27 years of experience in handling criminal cases for or against an accused, I consider the testimony of the witnesses credible and strong enough to convict Sen. Panfilo Lacson. But sadly, the results of the investigation have not been revealed. The failure to release the results has emboldened Lacson to announce his bid for the presidency in various fora.

I therefore call on the good senators to make public the results of the investigation whether in favor of or against Lacson to convince our people that the Philippines will not be a haven for narcopolitics.

—PROCOPIO S. BELTRAN JR.,
president emeritus,
Phil. Trial Lawyers Association Inc.,
Sulo Hotel Business Center,
Matalino Street, Diliman, Quezon City

HB 4110 a license to kill

UNITED we oppose House Bill 4110 because its true intent, which is cleverly concealed in its double talk, is actually the promotion of abortion and the furtherance of the use of all forms of artificial birth control. And both abortion and artificial birth control are grave sins against the Fifth Commandment of God: "Thou shall not kill."

Some legislators say they have withdrawn their sponsorship of the bill where they were listed as sponsors without their knowledge. But how come their names still appear on the revised copy of the bill?

They cannot pull the wool over our eyes, because we know what they are up to. They are trying to fool the people. With their deception about reproductive health care, they are actually issuing a license to kill. They are, therefore, hazardous to the health of the nation.

As the saying goes:

"You have been weighed,
You have been measured,
You have been found wanting."

Do not underestimate the numbers of those who oppose HB 4110. We are numerous and we have powerful allies. Our organizations are active and influential in all provinces, cities, municipalities, and barrios, all over the country.

Because you insist on pushing House Bill 4110, we will campaign against you. We will support only pro-life candidates.

—MA. ZENAIDA O. BELCINA,
president, National Confraternity
of the Lady of All Nations,
with 39 signatories,
c/o Philmusa Inc.,
Rm. 005 Mingson Bldg.,
P. Zamora St.,
Cebu City

Higher water rates unfair to consumers

IN THE POWER industry, the Lopez-controlled Meralco has been found guilty of overbilling consumers. In the water sector, the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services Inc. is hell-bent on imposing ridiculously high water rates despite its mismanagement, and highly inefficient and inadequate services.

Maynilad wants the water rates raised to P30 per cubic meter—double its current rate of P15.46. For the ordinary Filipino household (consuming only about 30 cubic meters), this would mean spending over P1,000 a month for water alone.

In addition to the rate increase, Maynilad is negotiating with Malacanang for non-payment of its concession obligations until 2007. Instead of resuming payments of the concession fees it had stopped paying since April 2001, Maynilad now wants a debt moratorium for the next five years. Since the bulk of these concession fees are supposed to go to the servicing of the debts Maynilad inherited from MWSS, Maynilad's appeal for deferment virtually transfers the burden of debt payments back into government's hands!

Although it may be convenient for Maynilad to resort to skyrocketing water rates and non-payment of concession fees to solve its near bankrupt situation, it is obvious that its financial troubles are beyond solution. In fact, a group of creditors led by the Asian Development Bank would only give Maynilad a $350-million loan if its petition to raise its rates to P30 per cubic meter is approved. Otherwise, they deem Maynilad unbankable.

Maynilad is not only in a deep financial rut, it has also proven to be grossly inefficient and incompetent in servicing its consumers. Many communities in the West Zone still do not have water connections, while those with connections suffer from unreliable water supply. An assessment of Maynilad's performance would show that it has miserably failed to comply with its targets and service obligations. For instance, Maynilad was not able to reduce non-revenue water (NRW) or water loss due to pilferage, leakage and illegal connections. On the contrary, under Maynilad's watch NRW increased to 67 percent, much higher than the 58 percent pre-privatization level.

After five years, it is clear that Maynilad is unfit to manage a water utility. Thus, another bailout of this ailing company is absolutely unacceptable and unjustifiable.

We demand the immediate termination of Maynilad's contract and the turnover of the management and operations of the West Zone area to the MWSS. We call on the government to institute reforms within the MWSS for a more effective and efficient management of water services.

—LIDY NACPIL, secretary general,
Freedom from Debt Coalition,

LandBank should stop purchase of expensive cars

THIS refers to the article that appeared in a recent issue of the Inquirer, titled "Palace okays SUVs for LandBank officials."

The story said that the bank will buy "21 top-of-the-line brand new cars, including four sports utility vehicles, costing millions."

LandBank officials should do some soul-searching because they are not owners of the bank. They should not display such unseemly extravagance using the people's money.

The House of Representatives and the Senate should conduct an investigation of this anomalous transaction. The management of LandBank does not seem to have learned their lesson. Two years ago, the bank was involved in an investigation by the Senate on purchase of luxury cars by education officials.

They should remember that public office is a public trust. Simple living is required during an economic crisis.

—ALDO P. FILOMENO, Quintos cor. M.H.
del Pilar Sts., Malate, Manila

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Third person arrested in Kenya attack

MOMBASA, Kenya/JERUSALEM—Kenyan police on Friday were holding a third person in the attack on Israeli targets in East Africa that killed 15 people as Israel evacuated wounded tourists from Mombasa.

Police were looking for men of Arab appearance who fired missiles at a plane of Israeli tourists in the coastal resort of Mombasa on Thursday, minutes before a jeep driven at speed exploded in the lobby of a nearby Israeli-owned hotel killing 15 people.

By Friday, three people had been detained.

"There was another person, a third person, held for questioning last night," police spokesperson Kimgori Mwangi said. "They are all foreigners."

Authorities have not revealed the nationalities of the two men and one woman being held.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon vowed a swift response.

"Our long arm will catch the attackers and those who dispatch them," Sharon told the nation later on Thursday after his Likud party re-elected him as its leader ahead of Israel's Jan. 28 general election.

Israeli and Kenyan officials have been quick to blame Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network for the attack on the Mombasa Paradise Hotel. The blast killed three Israelis, nine Kenyans and the three bombers.

US President George W. Bush condemned the bombing and Secretary of State Colin Powell called on the international community to do everything possible to bring to justice those responsible for the "horrific terrorist" acts.

But the White House said it was too soon to blame the group it accuses of masterminding the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States last year.

Sharon, who also used his victory speech to respond to the killing of six people in an attack in northern Israel, echoed the pledge Israel made after the killing of 11 of its athletes taken hostage by Palestinian gunmen at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Israel eventually carried out its threat, using its Mossad spy agency to track down and kill those it held responsible for the Munich attack.

"Israel will hunt down those who spilled the blood of its citizens. No one will emerge unscathed," the right-wing prime minister and former general said in a nationally televised address.

In a fax sent by a Lebanese media organization, the previously unheard-of "Army of Palestine" claimed responsibility for the Mombasa attack.

The United States blamed al-Qaida for 1998 truck bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Those attacks killed 224 people, most of them Africans.

On Friday, Israelis wounded in the hotel bombing arrived home on an Israeli air force plane, weeping in emotional reunions with relatives on the runway.

The air force Boeing 747 also brought back the bodies of three Israelis—two brothers aged 13 and 15, and a 61-year-old man—killed in the attack.

Minutes before the suicide bombers struck at the Paradise Hotel, missiles nearly hit an Israeli airliner taking off nearby. Hours later the Arkia Boeing 757-300 with 261 people on board landed safely in Tel Aviv escorted by Israeli military jets.

Police and security sources said the missiles were fired from a white Pajero jeep, possibly from shoulder-held launchers, by attackers suspected of being of Arab origin.

German intelligence sources described the weapons as Soviet-produced SAM-7 ground-to-air missiles. *Reuters*

Missiles mark new phase in terror war

By Jane Macartney

SINGAPORE—They are small, portable and easily obtained, and in the right hands—or wrong ones—can be used to deadly effect.

Anti-aircraft missiles like those used in the attempt to shoot down an Israeli passenger plane in Kenya on Thursday could, say defense analysts, be the latest strategy shift by extremists sowing global terror.

"These weapons have been around for a long time and are available on the open market," said Robert Karniol of Jane's Defense Weekly in Bangkok. "It was only a matter of time until people started moving in that direction."

In the past, shoulder-fired missiles such as the Soviet SA 7 believed to be used against the Israeli passenger airliner as it took off from Mombasa airport on Thursday, have mainly been used by insurgents in civil wars, not by individual extremists.

"This type of weaponry has not been associated with non-state organizations associated with violence," said Robert Patman, associate professor for international affairs at New Zealand's Otago University.

"But the perception is that an association as well-funded and sophisticated as al-Qaida would easily be capable of acquiring these," he said.

In Sri Lanka, for example, guerrillas shot down a commercial domestic flight from Jaffna in 1998, killing 52 civilians and prompting a ban on private air traffic to the peninsula. *Reuters*

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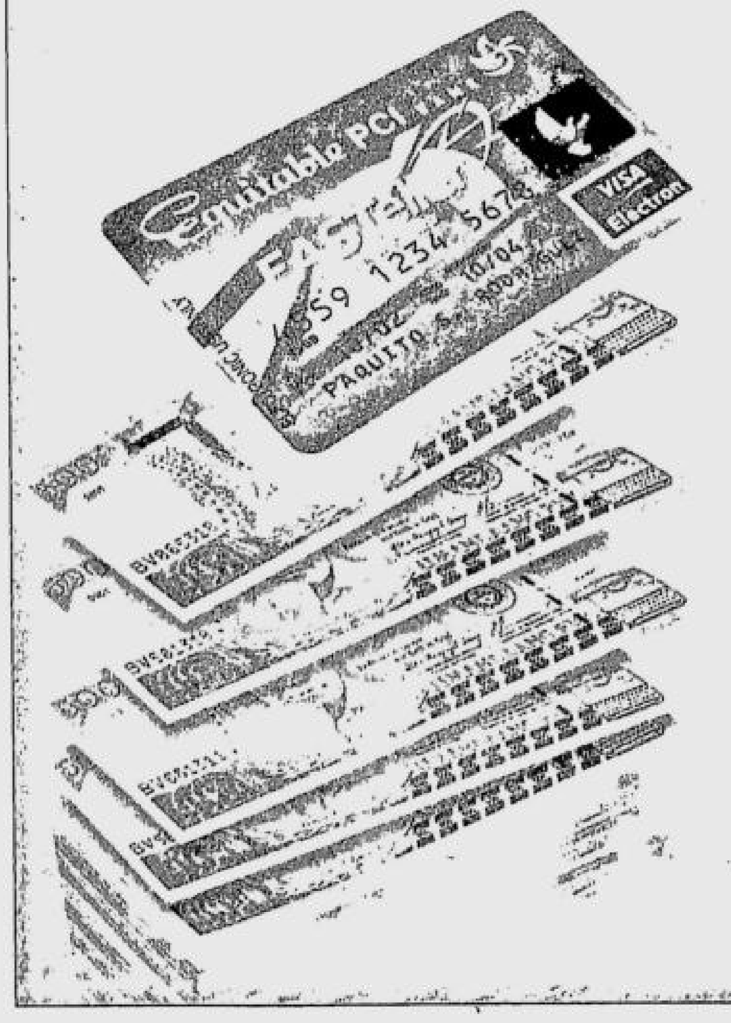

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'Fatwa' on author of Miss World article denounced in Nigeria

LAGOS—Nigeria's top Muslim body moved Thursday to calm tensions fueled by opposition to the Miss World beauty pageant which have triggered bloody sectarian riots.

The Supreme Islamic Council of Nigeria called on Muslims to forgive the author of an article on the contest which was branded blasphemous and denounced a "fatwa" calling for her death.

The council's general secretary, Lateef Adegbite, said that the Zamfara State government had no right to issue such an order and that it "should not be followed" by Muslims.

The deep tensions between Nigeria's Muslim and Christian communities—which each represent about half of the country's 120 million population—erupted once more last week.

More than 220 people were killed and 30,000 driven from their homes in the northern city of Kaduna after a protest over a newspaper report triggered three days of sectarian riots.

The article, which appeared on Nov. 16 in the Nigerian daily This Day, had defended Miss World from its Muslim critics, suggesting the Prophet Mohammed might have married a contestant.

Amid a storm of negative publicity, Miss World organizers abandoned plans to hold the show's closing ceremony in the Nigerian capital Lagos, and shifted it to London.

But in Nigeria, the controversy raged on.

On Tuesday, Mamuda Shinkafi, deputy governor of the northern state of Zamfara, announced a "fatwa" or Islamic legal ruling calling for This Day fashion writer Isioma Daniel to be killed.

The call was immediately condemned by Nigeria's federal government, which does not recognize the Islamic Sharia law code recently reintroduced in Zamfara and 11 more mainly Muslim states.

Christian leaders, many of whom fear some Muslims want to "Islamicize" their shared country, called on the government to defend Nigeria's secular constitution.

"All the social unrest and violent upheavals we are witnessing now are not unconnected with the mindless introduction of Sharia in some northern states," said Archbishop Ola Makinde of Abuja.

AFP

UN inspections uncovered Blair's 'lies,' says Baghdad

BAGHDAD—Iraq said on Friday that renewed field inspections by UN experts had uncovered the "lies" of the government of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who had claimed the inspected sites had been producing banned weapons.

"The foot-and-mouth disease institute and the al-Nasr company were among the sites accused by the report of British Prime Minister Tony Blair in Sept. 2002 of carrying out banned activities," the foreign ministry said.

"But the results that the inspectors reached yesterday reveal the spuriousness of the allegations and lies propagated by Tony Blair and uncover his false accusations against Iraq," it said in a statement carried by all newspapers.

It provided a detailed report of the site visits on Wednesday and Thursday by experts of the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The statement said the teams visited "sites accused by the British and US foreign ministries of carrying out banned activities." "They held meetings with the (site directors), asked questions, requested explanations . . . and received answers," it said.

The inspectors took samples and pictures of the sites, the foreign ministry added.

A British government report on Sept. 24 mentioned the "al-Dawrah Foot and Mouth Vaccine Institute which produced botulinum toxin and conducted virus research. There is some intelligence to suggest that work was also conducted on anthrax."

AFP

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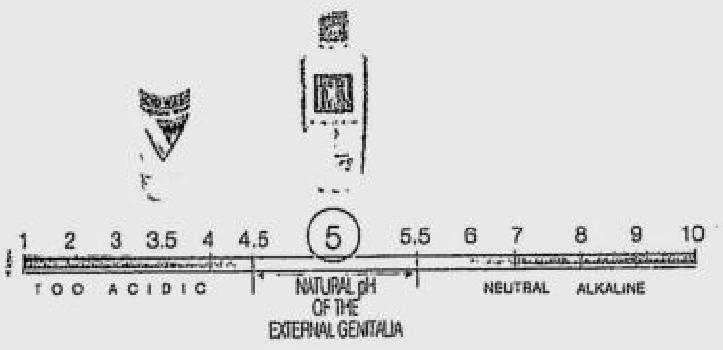

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Suicide top killer among young people in China

BEIJING—Suicide has emerged as the leading cause of death among young Chinese, and it has reached "alarming" levels in rural areas, state media warned Friday.

It accounts for 3.6 percent of deaths in all age groups in China and has stirred authorities into allowing the establishment of an organization devoted to suicide prevention, the China Daily reported.

Suicide is the top killer among people between 15 and 34 years of age, and makes up nearly one-third of deaths among young rural women, the paper said.

"Limited opportunities and social support networks for rural women in China, combined with a lack of strong cultural or religious taboos against suicide, may play a role," Li Xianyuan, a psychologist, said.

"Many women in some remote rural areas seek extreme ways to express their desperation," Li added.

The situation in the cities, while not as bad as in the countryside, is also worsening, the paper said.

Sharply increased competition in modern society has driven many vulnerable women to commit suicide as a way to escape tough problems, the paper said.

Alerted to the severity of the problem, the Chinese government has given the go-ahead to the establishment of Beijing Psychological Crisis Research and Intervention Center.

The center, which opens to the public next week, will use the Internet, hotlines and face-to-face consultations to help prevent suicides, the paper said.

The warning in the Chinese state media came as researchers published a report arguing China will have to control access to pesticides and rat poison if it wants to combat its suicide epidemic.

According to a study to be published in The Lancet on Saturday, of 519 suicides that were examined by US and Chinese researchers, 62 percent were caused by agricultural chemicals or rat poison. *AFP*

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Surgeons exhort public consciousness about health

In sixty-six years, after it was organized by a small group of practicing surgeons in Manila, the Philippine College of Surgeons (PCS), in its determined effort to lead and retain possession of the highest standards of surgical practice throughout the country, has now burgeoned into a mega organization of 2,141 members, also called Fellows. It chose no other alternative course and leaning than to continue making favorable balances and growing better with now 11 chapters all over the archipelago, working persistently in serving far, almost inaccessible areas with the finest of obtainable care and scientific undertaking. Surgical cases are identified early, and village folks are periodically assembled and taught how to deal with common ailments through simplified and easily exercised technics, while a qualified surgeon is meanwhile being fetched from the adjacent towns. Medical education is directed to the masses in an uninterrupted function, which chapter surgeons participate in so that the sick should better go to them for treatment rather than to quack healers or herb hoaxes who might only exacerbate their condition. Along with a sister medical organization, the Philippine Medical Association (PMA), the Philippine College of Surgeons is exhorting public consciousness about health, which is to a nation the leading basic factor in its vigor and effectiveness as a global participant in progress and economic advancement.

Under its auspices, the PCS has now, in its roll, almost all of the cutting specialty societies, making it the mainspring of policy, leadership, and direction in total health care delivery, and has made momentous gains in the development of consummate surgicare in the Asian and Pacific sections of the world, including ecological auditing and protection.

As many as 52 presidents have stood at the head of the organization and led the PCS in its evolution, seasoning, and placement as the most stable and sturdily mature aggregate of cutting specialists in the Asian cochlear. Each president had given his supreme and optimum commitment to produce what now is benefiting the Fellows by giving new vigor and dynamic impact as well as racial prestige to our country at large.

One of the historic deeds of the PCS was the publication of the Philippine Journal of Surgery in 1946. It changed names a number of times, finally designating its appellation to Philippine Journal of Surgical Specialties, consolidating all the cutting specialties which joined the College. Researches and scientific innovations conceived by the Fellows were documented through the Journal, while news and special features and activities were circulated through a tabloid newsletter distributed every other month or quarterly to all the Fellows nationwide.

Dr. Fernando L. Lopez
Vice President and Overall Chairman
Committee on Conventions

The presidents who have made the PCS more go-getting and captured an international contemporary outlook of changing for better and faster advancement are: Drs. Enrique S. Filart, 1974; Augusto P. Sarmiento, 1975; Fidel Z. Cuajunco, Jr., 1976; Felipe B. Constantino, 1977; Crisostomo A. Arcilla Sr., 1978; Cresencio B. Abes, 1979; Jose M. Pujalte, 1980; Alfredo T. Ramirez. 1981; Avenilo P. Aventura, 1982; Teodoro P. Nuguid, 1983; George G. Eufemio, 1984; Vicente Q. Arguelles, 1985; Antonio A. Limson, 1986; Gilcerio M. Bustamante, 1987; Faustino T. Domingo, 1988; Leonardo A. Ona, Jr., 1989; Enrique T. Ona, 1990; Willie N. Lagdameo, 1991; Renato Q. Sibayan, 1992; Adriano V. Laudico, 1993; Modesto O. Llamas, 1994; Merlin C. Cipriano, 1995; Roman L. Belmonte Jr., 1996; Florentino C. Doble, 1997; Antonio B. Sison, 1998; Francisco Y. Arcellana, Jr., 1999; Narciso S. Navarro Jr., 2000'; Alberto B. Roxas, 2001; and Ernesto C. Tan, 2002.

The PCS has now in its roll almost all of the cutting specialty societies, making it the mainspring of policy, leadership, and direction in total health care delivery.

For this year, with Dr. Ernesto C. Tan leading the PCS as its 53rd president, his immediate officers have stood by him faithfully and carried out all his policies that were conceived to further uplift the status of the PCS. His Board of Regents are Drs. Fernando L. Lopez, vice-president; Edgardo R. Cortez, Treasurer; and Eduardo R. Gatchalian, secretary. The rest of the Regents are Drs. Generoso T. Abes, Armando C. Crisostomo , Leonardo L. Ona, Alex A. Erasmo, Jose C. Gonzales, Rodolfo L. Nitollama, Rey Melchor F. Santos, Antonio S. Say, Stephen Sixto S. Siguan, and Maximo H. Simbulan Jr.

The Philippine College of Surgeons is not a school or a workshop. It is a conglomerate of the cream of Filipino surgeons enrolled together by their cohesive dream of giving the country the best of surgical knowledge and care, and of the determination to lead and not to be left behind in their particular fields of surgical specialization. It is an organization that was founded to stir up the fertile minds of surgeons so that they might discover the colossal channels through which knowledge could flow from one mentality into another within Fellows of their own genre.

In Dr. Tan's report on the achievements of the College in the year 2002, it is stressed that he continued to unify the various specialty societies and promote public awareness of the PCS locally and worldwide. A primer was printed highlighting the rewards of joining this big surgical organization which are the education, training, and scholarship of worthy Fellows through research and scientific publications, health legislation, and special programs. The PCS website has been conscientiously improved and updated, featuring the PCS organizational set-up with its incumbent officers and Board of Governors. Decisions of the Board of Regents and pertinent information about PCS activities and recommendations have been listed down for international dissemination. The so-called SURE (Surgery for Unvisited Regions for Education) missions, which are surgical treatment programs for indigent patients in underserved regions have been sustained by the PCS chapters and affiliate specialty societies.

To further help the public understand what the PCS is all about, trimedia campaigns through television, radio, and newspapers have been carried out frequently. Many Fellows have been likewise heartened to attend overseas conventions in Asia, the US, Europe, and the Americas to keep posted with what is new in the field of surgery.

Dr. Tan has continued to show his involvement in directions that will give a favorable turn for PCS Fellows, mainly the Fellows Assistance Plan which provides families of deceased Fellows a generous assistance for a very affordable annual contribution, and finally, a Pension Plan for qualified beneficiaries evlauated by the Committee on Finance.

52 presidents have led the PCS to become the most sturdily mature aggregate of cutting specialists in Asian cochlear.

After its By-Laws was adopted shortly by its Regents, the PCS proposed to set a day to commemorate and recognize its moment of arrangement, and called it Foundation Day. However, although the date was designated, the Fellows had probably skipped and overlooked its proper acknowledgement. In 1997, on the basis of its 61st anniversary, the PCS Foundation Day was launched and inaugurated for the first time. The initial celebration was austere and lacked the festive adornment of the true recollection of past nostalgic and historic commencement. The resuscitation of its memorial was undertaken by then PCS President Florentino C. Doble, in which multiple simultaneous medical and surgical missions were sent to distant regions throughout the country. The missions were not ideally equipped, but they were totally friendly in character, so that even known hot spots and politically disapproving localities in the South were visited with the help of the available viable PCS Chapters. The PCS, exceeding its own spartan expectations, accomplished its well-intentioned approach and introduction to the people, especially our ethnic brethren, and successfully sowed the first seeds of medical consciousness to the barriofolk who were still obscurely unenlightened and wrapped in superstition regarding the etiology of various common diseases and their efficacious treatment.

Last year, an unexpected novelty was injected by then PCS President Alberto B. Roxas to memorialize Foundation Day, which was a nation-wide tree-planting project aimed at restoring the ecology of our watersheds and planting areas on the mountainsides which have been denuded by unscrupulous loggers and other flora concessionaires.

Forests are not ordinarily owned by the people, but the government gives out concessions in certain thickly forested areas so that private individuals called concessionaires, are leased those areas.

For the world as a whole about 78% of the forests are state owned, while 22% is privately owned. While fire is regarded as a formidable enemy of the forests, man still is the most implacable and destructive culprit. Forest protection and management, therefore require considerable demands, especially in the line of continuing the existence and growth of trees that are destroyed by fire or cut for human consumption. In hilly or mountainous regions, the primary responsibility of the government is to minimize erosion and regularize the flow or control the drying up of water basins or springs. There is experimental evidence that small forest clearings substantially increase the total runoff of water, and therefore could be disadvantageous to a nearby community in terms of its irrigation and water to supply the needs of individuals living there.

By starting a simple type of reforestation by tree-planting especially around watersheds by the PCS, the mantle of coolness that tree-shade gives to the soil will improve, aside from encouraging our fauna to increase, reappear, nest, and reproduce in the bowers that nature has provided them. Flash floods, evidently caused by denudation of our forests and erosion of the bald stretches of marginal lands and man-made clearings, would be subsequently reduced. This noble strategy of tree-planting places the PCS with a fresh developmental vision, aside from its primal commitment in promoting and preserving health through high standards of surgical practice.

The innovative texture of an annual tree-planting activity by the Fellows underscores the mission of the College not only to improve its public image but also to extend its civic concerns beyond its traditional areas of relevance in the science and practice of healing by operative dimensions.

A group of surgeons and their wives at the planting site in La Mesa Dam Watershed

It is important to note that when rain falls on bald land, it brings along its flow some surface soil down the slopes or hills or level areas, and in time gullies will form where more fertile soil flows away. Forests obviously prevent the destruction of precious land. Thus, this explains the speculative philosophy of annual tree-planting by the PCS.

There are several laudable efforts that had been considered momentous in the existence of the PCS and should be articulated and put on record. With Dr. Tan the PCS has proceeded to participate in the calendar of approaches of the Specialists to the Provinces Program with the Department of Health, Philippine Society of Anesthesiologists, and the United Laboratories. There have been meetings with Drs. Sergio V. Rojo III of the District Hospital in Surigao del Norte, Dominic M. Nazareno of Carmen District Hospital in Carmen, Bohol, and Patrick Stephen Felecitas, Batanes Provincial Hospital of Basco, Batanes. Meetings and administrative liaisons have been assembled with other affiliate societies to discuss salient problems and their possible interpretations and resolution, or their invalidation if not abolition of the Medical Malpractice Act, the Medical Act of 1959, HMO Bill, Patient's Rights Bill, and others affecting the practice of medicine and surgery.

Dr. Ernesto C. Tan
President, PCS

The College has also spent appreciable time in planning how to acquire financial sturdiness by meeting friends and enthusiastic donors, leasing out the second story of the PCS building to solvent renters, devise cost-cutting measures in the administrative compliment of the organization and upgrading of the salary scales of the Secretariat staff.

In the field of electronics, the PCS has envisioned to computerize elections during the annual convention. This might demonstrate to our country and government that computerization will reduce if not eliminate large scale cheating of politicians in our remote areas. The computerization of voting in the PCS might serve as a prototype for a faster dispatch and information of election returns.

There are, of course, target goals that had not been achieved, not only because of too short a tenure of the presidency, but more so because of fiscal shortfall. Some of the items that are for endorsement are the national surgical manpower study to generate more accurate data on the number and distribution of surgeons in the country, the formulation of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines of common surgical conditions, seminars on research methodology for all cutting specialties, computerization of all PCS records, two-month rotation of PCS scholars to Asean Medical Centers, and the establishment of the Joint Accreditation Council to coordinate accreditation of the various surgical specialties.

The novel strategy of tree planting places the PCS with a fresh developmental vision, aside from its other primal commitments.

Dr. Tan's incumbency as PCS President will conclude this year with the observance of the 58th Annual Clinical Congress on December 1-4, 2002, to be held at the EDSA Shangri-la Hotel in Mandaluyong City. Its keynote theme is "Emerging Trends in Trauma and Critical Care". The overall chairman of the Congress is Dr. Fernando L. Lopez and has announced that it will be specially interesting as well as highly educational with an impressive host of foreign invited guest lecturers.

A birds eyeview of the general activities that have been prepared to answer the plea of our surgeons for continued education and update are reiterated thus:

On November 30, 2002, Saturday from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Orientation of Inductees at the CME Auditorium, St. Martin de Porres Building of the UST, and registration at the EDSA Shangri-la Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

On December 1, 2002, Sunday (Day 1) at EDSA Shangri-la Hotel, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Opening Ceremonies and start of the convention, Welcome Remarks, Induction of New Fellows, and GT Singian lecture by Dr. Vicente Q. Arguelles. This will be followed by Opening of Exhibits with Ms. Sylvia L. Tan and Dr. Estrellita V.F. Lopez as main guests. At 2:00 PM, 7th Postgraduate Course on "Update on Diagnosis and Management of Abdominal Injuries". There will be a Holy Mass at 5:00 PM and Fellowship Night at 7:00 PM.

On December 2, 2002, Monday (Day 2) starting at 7:00 AM there will be a simultaneous Kapihan on "Surgical Infections in the ICU", and "Chest and Cardiac Injuries", Plenary Sessions, Panel Discussions, Case Presentations and Tanghalian sa PCS; Election at Batanes Room from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

On December 3, 2002, Tuesday (Day 3) there will again be simultaneous Kapihan on "Nutritional Support in Trauma and Critically Ill Patients", and "Sports Injuries", Plenary Sessions, Symposia, Interactive Sessions and Postgraduate Courses.

On December 4, 2002, Wednesday (Day 4) there will again be simultaneous Kapihan on "Head Trauma", and "Neck Injuries (Vascular and Aerodigestive)", Plenary Sessions, Symposia, "Dialogue with the Board of Regents, Board of Governors, Chapter and Surgical Specialty Societies Presidents.

The foreign guests this year are Prof. Demetrios Demetriades, Director of Trauma, University of California School of Medicine, University of Washington, Surgeon in Chief and Director, Harborview Medical Center, Seattle; Prof. Herand Abcarian, Turi Josefsen Professor and Chairman, Department of Surgery, University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago; Dr. Michael Robert Marohn, Associate Professor and Vice Chairman (AF) Uniformed Services University of the Health Services, Chief, General Surgery Sciences, Malcolm Grow USAF Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland; Dr. Hernan M. Reyes, attending Pediatric Surgeon, Children Hospital of Southwest Florida; Dr. Joseph S. Solomkin, Infectious Disease surgeon, Vascular Surgery Section, Department of Surgery, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, Connecticut; and Prof. David C. Wherry, Professor of Surgery, Uniformed Services of Health Sciences, Military Consultant to the USAF, Surgeon General for General Surgery, Bethesda, Maryland. Most of the scientific programs will be steered by the different specialty societies through the second, third, and fourth day of the congress. The convention is expected to yield auspicious results and help nutrify our craving for contemporary didactics on critical care and trauma.

JESUS G. LIZARDO, MD, FPCS

MANIFESTO OF THE PHILIPPINE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS ON SAFEGUARDS TO THE HEALTH CARE OF THE FILIPINO PATIENT

The Philippine College of Surgeons (PCS) or The College is the umbrella organization of all the surgical specialties. It has always maintained the welfare of the patient as its first and foremost priority. The PCS is a collegial body of fully qualified diplomates who have sworn to provide and promote the highest standards in the Art and Science of Medicine and Surgery.

The PCS believes that health is a basic human right and every citizen deserves the right to quality health care. Yet each country has its own unique health care system according to its unique social, cultural, political and economic environment.

The PCS has been in the forefront of carrying out activities and adopting policies to promote and safeguard the highest standards of surgical practice in the land.

First, the PCS coordinates with the different medical colleges and training hospitals all over the land to guide in the creation of a surgical curriculum geared towards producing doctors well versed in the diagnosis and treatment of the common surgical diseases amongst our people.

Second, as the doctor decides to become a specialist, then the PCS through its component societies, supervises and accredits training programs in surgery. The College evaluates the residents regularly to determine their progress not only with the basics of diagnostic and therapeutic surgical skills but in the elements of service and research as well.

Third, the examining arm of the College is the Philippine Board of Surgery. The Board conducts rigorous written and oral exams before graduates of the training programs can be called a specialist. Once passed, these surgeons are now called diplomates and are fully qualified to render quality surgical care.

But to assume the title of a Fellow means the credentials and character of the surgeon will have to be scrutinized even further. As a requirement, it takes 2 years of active practice before a diplomate may apply for Fellowship. This should give time for the College to assess the competence and ethical practice of the particular surgeon.

Once inside the PCS, then the prestigious title carries with it the lifelong commitment to continuing medical education. That is the reason why the College holds midyear and annual conventions, research and poster podium sessions and post graduate courses, and scientific symposia at each available opportunity. Each hospital accredited by the PCS is mandated to conduct weekly conferences, morbidity and mortality reviews, tumor board meetings. These, on top of the journals that are critically appraised and discussed now and again.

As an organization, the PCS participates and assists in the different health care programs of the Department of Health and other national agencies. The College supports advocacy of the No Smoking Campaign and the Wear a Seatbelt program for example. The College has a regular committee that undertakes surgical missions to far flung, underserved areas of the country.

The College is active in campaigning and lobbying for bills that are beneficial and advantageous to the patient like the Patient's Right to quality health care in the Patient's bill of rights and the right to choose his/her own doctor in the HMO bill.

Our College through its committees have published clinical practice guidelines which advice practitioners based on present evidence on how best to manage particular surgical diseases.

All these activities mean to bring about a breed of surgeons who are sensitive to patients needs, knowledgeable in craft and skills of surgery and prudent in the decisions they make.

But for the surgeon who has erred, the College is ever vigilant. The Committee on Ethics receives all queries and complaints from all sectors, investigates and gives recommendations for action by the College on matters that pertain to the ethical and professional conduct of Fellows. The College can assign an expert witness if need be in a court of law. On the part of the Fellows, the College can provide judicial advice.

In the battle against disease, it helps to have a safe and competent surgeon doing the surgery. That is the mark of the PCS Fellow.

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Area larger than England scorched in Australia

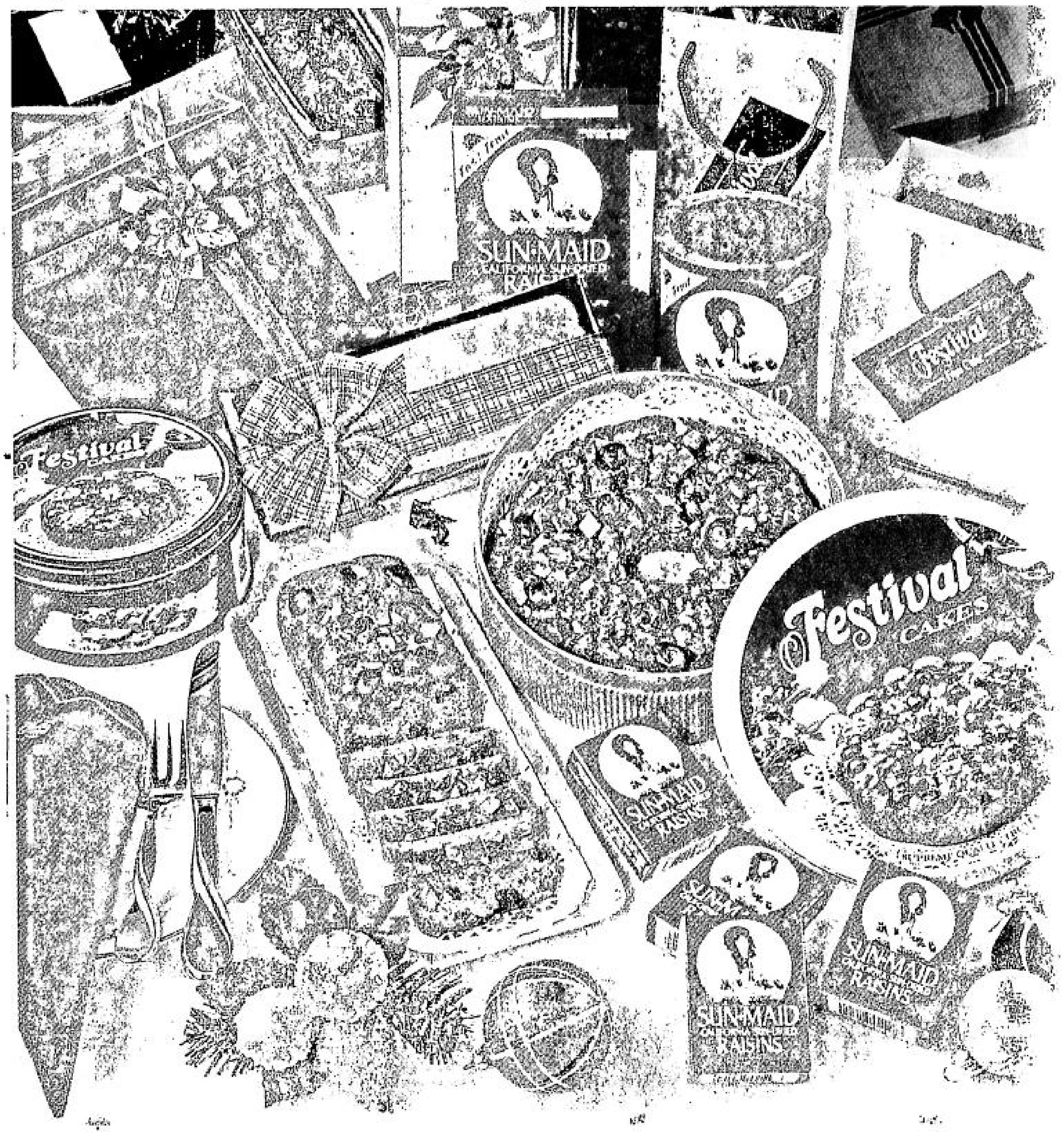
SYDNEY—Raging bushfires in central Australia have scorched an area of outback larger than England in the past few months, local authorities said on Thursday.

Virtually unnoticed while hundreds of firefighters tackle more high-profile blazes in Australia's populated eastern states, the central Australian fires have eaten up 150,000 sq km of bush in the Northern Territory.

"It's been a number of fires basically since mid-August until now, but it just got worse and worse," said Neil Phillips of the Bushfires Council Northern Territory.

"We've had properties that are 3,000-4,000 sq km in size and in some instances 80 percent of those properties have been burnt. You just let it burn itself out, that's all you can do," Phillips said.

Recent rainfall has brought a welcome break, he added, but up to 30 percent of the southern third of the Northern Territory, or an area slightly larger than England's 130,410 sq km, has already been burnt. *Reuters*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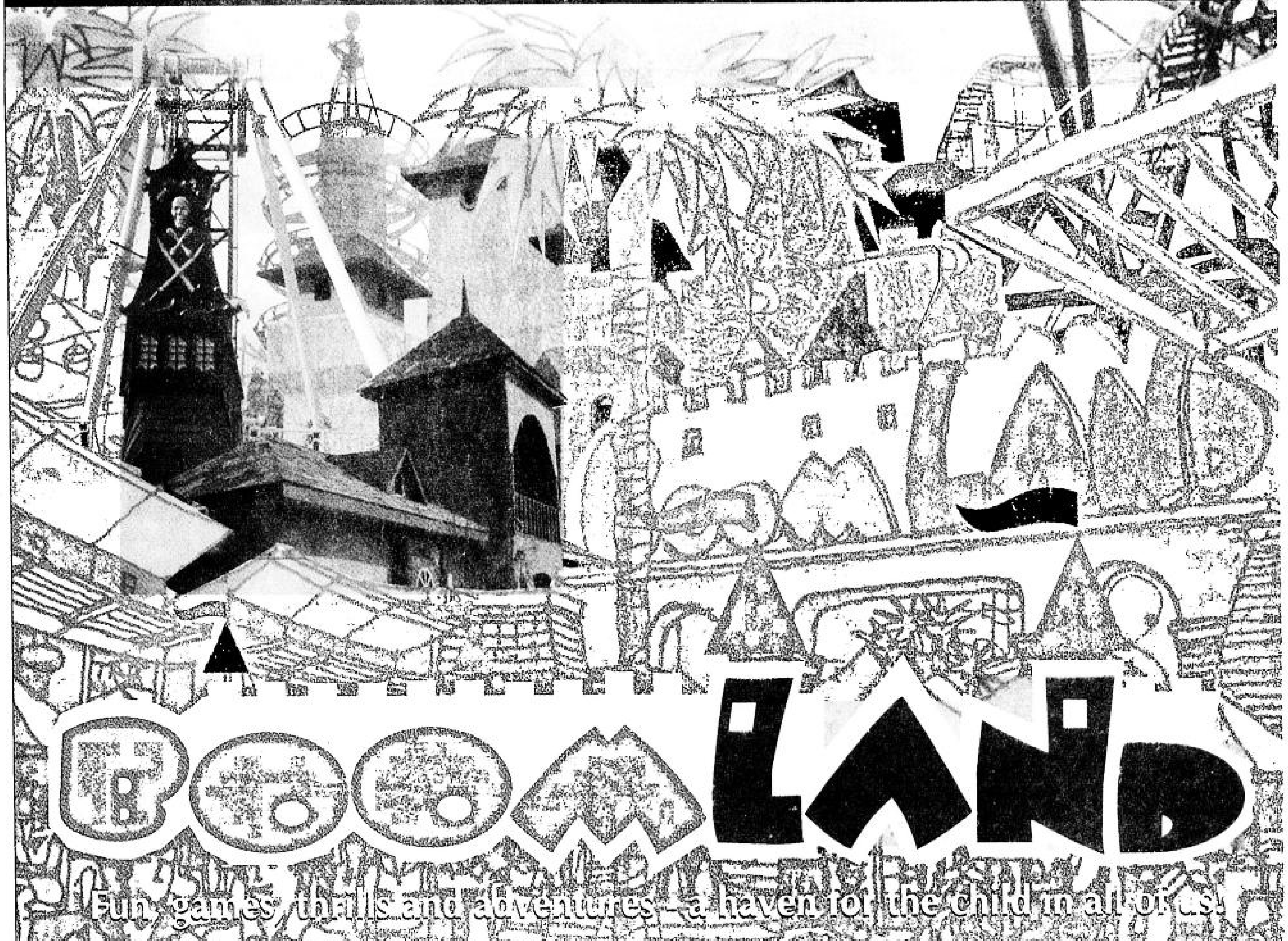
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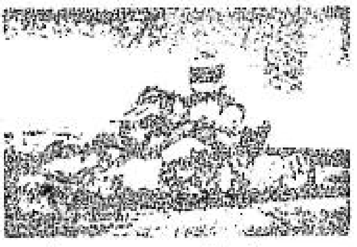
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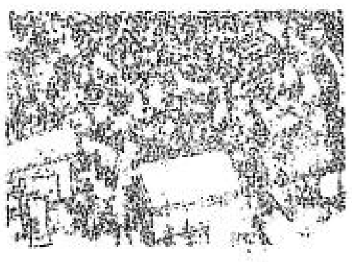
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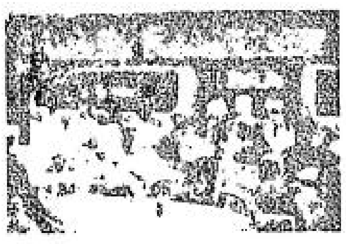
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Across the NATION

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Trader, scion linked to fake drugs in Cebu

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The president of the Philippine Drugstores Association-Cebu chapter and son of the owner of a supermarket was implicated in the distribution and selling of a regulated drug and fake drugs.

But Robinson Uy, 24, denied any involvement in the P5 million worth of alleged fake medicines and Nubain found on Thursday afternoon inside an apartment on Carlock Street, Barangay San Nicolas, in this city.

Uy is the son of businessman Julian Uy who owns La Nueva Supermart and some drugstores in downtown Cebu.

Elements of the Criminal and Detection Group in Central Visayas (CIDG-7) conducted the raid on the apartment allegedly rented by Uy.

Seized were 52 boxes of Lecit-E at 100 bottles per box; 84 boxes of Clusivol at 100 bottles per box; 125 boxes of Biogesic tablets, and four boxes of Nubain with 100 ampules each.

Nubain, a regulated drug, is an injectable painkiller, but it has been widely abused by drug dependents. In Cebu, the drug is being sold in the black market at P40 per shot.

Senior Supt. Edwin Diocos, CIDG-7 chief, said the raid was based on a search warrant issued also on Thursday by Cebu Regional Trial Court Judge Soliver Peras after Uy's alleged trusted man, Elmer Baron, implicated the young businessman in the illegal selling of Nubain and fake drugs.

Diocos said Baron was arrested near Uy's apartment during a buy-bust operation on Wednesday afternoon for allegedly selling 100 ampules of Nubain.

The buy-bust operation was made after the CIDG-7 received a report on the rampant selling of Nubain in Barangay Talamban. The CIDG-7 had identified Baron as one of the suppliers of the regulated drug in the village.

During interrogation, Baron allegedly tagged Uy as the supplier of Nubain and fake drugs.

Benguet farmers unite to wage war on imports

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Faced with overwhelming odds from overseas vegetable growers, Benguet farmers have combined their resources to enable them to match Australian imports and smuggled Chinese vegetables with "better quality Baguio vegetables."

The farmers formed the United Farmers of Benguet Federation (UFBF) during the weeklong celebration of Benguet's 102nd Foundation Day, to acknowledge the need for vegetable farmers to "get their acts together," said Mayor Nestor Fongwan.

Benguet Gov. Raul Molintas hosted the province's first vegetable stakeholders' summit on Nov. 18 and 19, which addressed the accounting, shipping and warehousing problems of farmers as well as the government's failure to shield Philippine agriculture from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

But UFBF was necessary for a Dec. 5 meeting between vegetable farmers and vegetable importers here, Fongwan said.

He said Benguet farmers could offer Manila-based suppliers with guarantees that they could supply top-of-the-line commodities that "are far better varieties than those being imported by groceries and hotels."

Imports

Many of these vegetable suppliers were allowed by the Bureau of Plant Industry to purchase their commodities from Australia and Denmark between July and September last year to compensate for a high demand caused by Typhoon Feria, which destroyed Benguet farms.

But a deluge of smuggled vegetables from China and Taiwan trailed the legal importations, displacing the so-called Baguio vegetables from their traditional Manila markets.

The suppliers agreed to discuss terms with the farmers this month, after pressure mounted against all vegetable importers, La Trinidad Councilor John Kim said in an earlier interview.

The UFBF was meant as a complementary group to a proposed Cordillera Task Force for Support Services, which would funnel out state financing for farm-to-market roads, refrigerated storage facilities and packaging services to the vegetable industry here, according to documents obtained by the INQUIRER.

Assurance

Molintas said the Department of Agriculture had assured him that it would consolidate its resources under this task force to begin resuscitating the region's vegetable industry.

Fongwan said many of these support services were "a long time coming."

"They already promised to give Benguet a refrigerated truck that could transport vegetables to Manila but we never got it," he said.

But Fongwan said the summit participants were more concerned about Malacañang's response.

The farmers asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to relax several tariff reduction policies, which are due for implementation next year under the country's GATT commitments.

They also asked the President to reassess certain importation programs, which rely on outdated mechanisms.

Molintas earlier said 328 importers were allowed to source out Danish potatoes when local potatoes from the Cordillera exceeded a "trigger price" of P6 a kilo. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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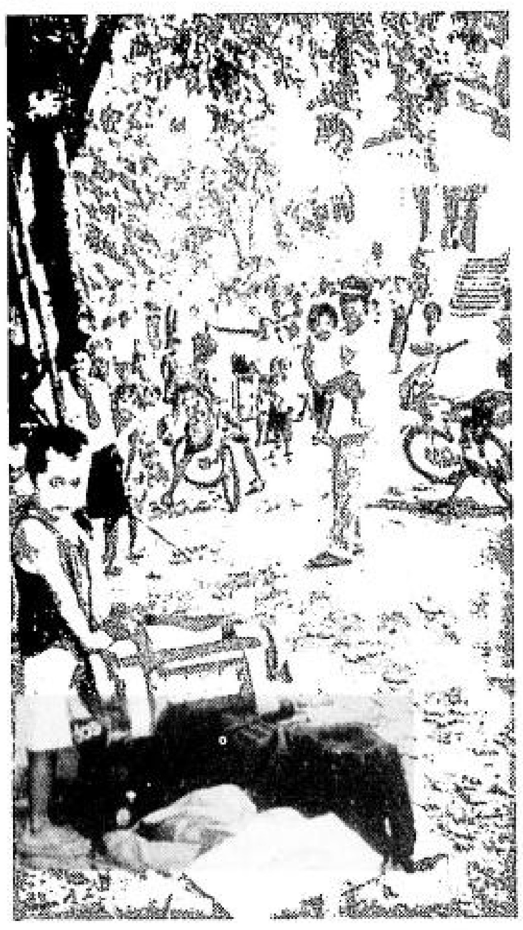
House urged to probe killings in Mindoro

By Clarice Colting and Delfin Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CALAPAN CITY—A militant fisherman's group on Wednesday urged the House committees on human rights and civil and political rights to call for an investigation of the latest spate of violence in Puerto Galera town, Oriental Mindoro.

"The violent situation has already claimed the lives of seven people and seven others were still missing according to reports filed by human rights watchdogs in Southern Tagalog," Gerry Albert Corpuz, information officer of the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), told the INQUIRER.

"This is more explosive and more dreadful than the Basilan experience. The military is converting Oriental Mindoro into an island of mass graves and killing fields upon the Palace and the military's marching orders," he added.


THE LONG journey to safety starts on this village in Mindoro as soldiers were accused of abuses against residents. MADONNA VIROLA

Three members of Pamalakaya were killed separately on Nov. 23, according to a fact-finding mission organized by Karapatan-Southern Tagalog (ST) on Nov. 24.

The victims were identified as Oscar Sacdalan, 48, of Sitio Hulo, Barangay Tabinay Maliit; and Vedaso Lalong Isip, 58, and Anthony Martinez, 37, of Barangay Talipanan.

Eden Marcellana, secretary general of Karapatan-ST, said the group talked to some residents who requested anonymity for security reasons.

At around 2:30 a.m., several armed men wearing bonnets and military uniform forcibly entered Sacdalan's house and hogtied Anamarie Sacdalan and her three children, including her son's fiancee. The source said the armed men brought Sacdalan outside their house.

Five gunshots were heard and Sacdalan was found dead outside their house. The body suffered a bullet wound in the head, two in the abdomen, and one in the stomach.

The human rights group also learned from the Puerto Galera Police Station that another person, Lalong Isip, was killed on Nov. 23.

Police also reported that Martinez was abducted in Barangay Talipanan at 1 p.m., Nov. 22.

On the night of Nov. 26, a member of Pamalakaya informed Karapatan-ST that the head of Martinez was found in Barangay Km 37 and his body was found in Barangay Villaflor.

The victim was reportedly the leader of Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Puerto Galera, an alliance of people's groups opposed to the privatization and conversion of coastal areas in the province.

The body was identified by his wife who said her husband was abducted by armed men in bonnets and fatigue uniform on Nov. 24.

Marcellana said two residents of Barangay Tabinay Maliit, Victor Saducos and Arsenio Manalo, were also abducted at around 11 p.m., Nov. 22. The two were still missing.

"The men were in military uniform and armed with M-16 and M-14 rifles," she said, quoting residents who declined to be identified.

Pamalakaya also urged the Department of Justice to reconsider the case against Army Col. Jovito Palparan in the wake of the recent spate of killings and abductions on the island.

On Aug. 28, Prosecutor Sebastian Capunong Jr. dismissed the case against Palparan for the killing of Napoles, Bayan Muna coordinator in Oriental Mindoro on May 28, for lack of evidence to establish conspiracy.

Bayan Muna lawyers filed a motion for consideration on Oct. 10 but it was also dismissed on the same ground.

School hit for covering up molestation

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Questions on how children's rights are being protected at the Benedictine-run St. Scholastica's Academy here surfaced after a male teacher on Wednesday allegedly sexually molested a Grade 6 pupil.

It was the first such case reported in the history of the 80-year-old Catholic school.

The uncle and guardian of the girl aired doubts about the "child-friendliness" of the school, saying school officials and teachers "held back" information on the suspect.

He said his niece's class adviser, to whom the child first reported the incident, immediately cleared the teacher without investigating.

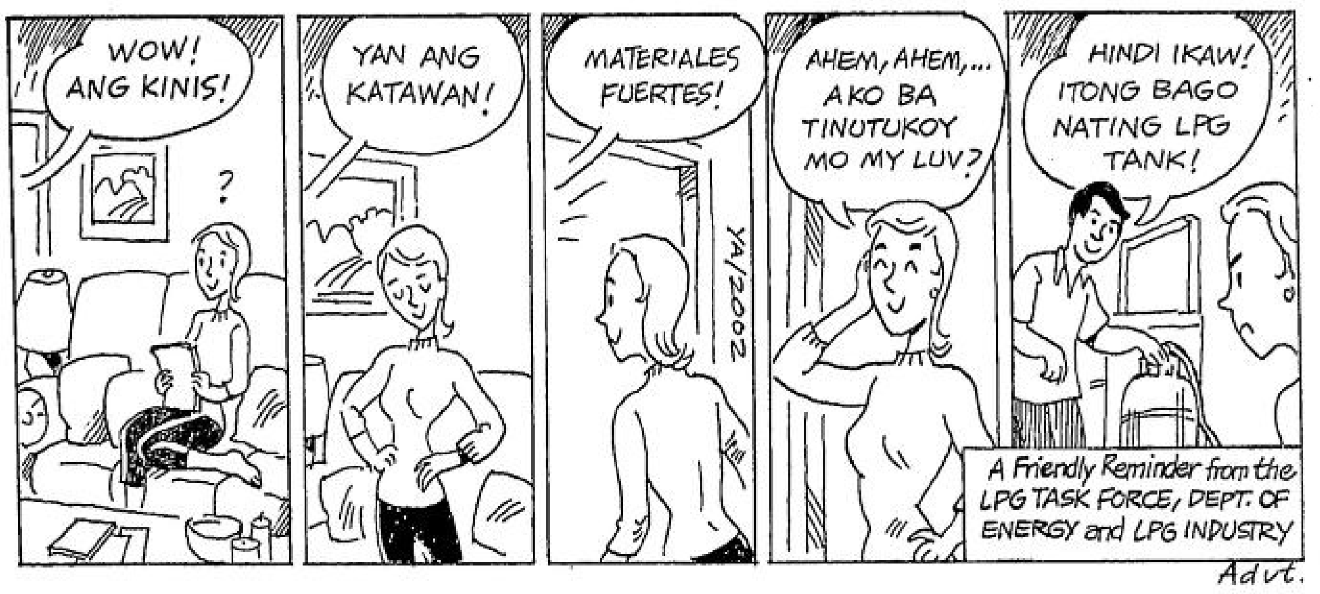
"He cannot possibly do that to you," the girl quoted her adviser as telling her.

A nun, he said, blocked the efforts of the local police to invite the suspect, an elementary science instructor, for questioning on the basis of a complaint filed by the girl's uncle on Thursday.

"This is an institution we have expected to protect children yet this is the way school authorities are dealing with the problem," he told the INQUIRER.

The complaint, filed at the city's fiscal office, accused the teacher of violating the law that protects children from various forms of abuse and discrimination.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk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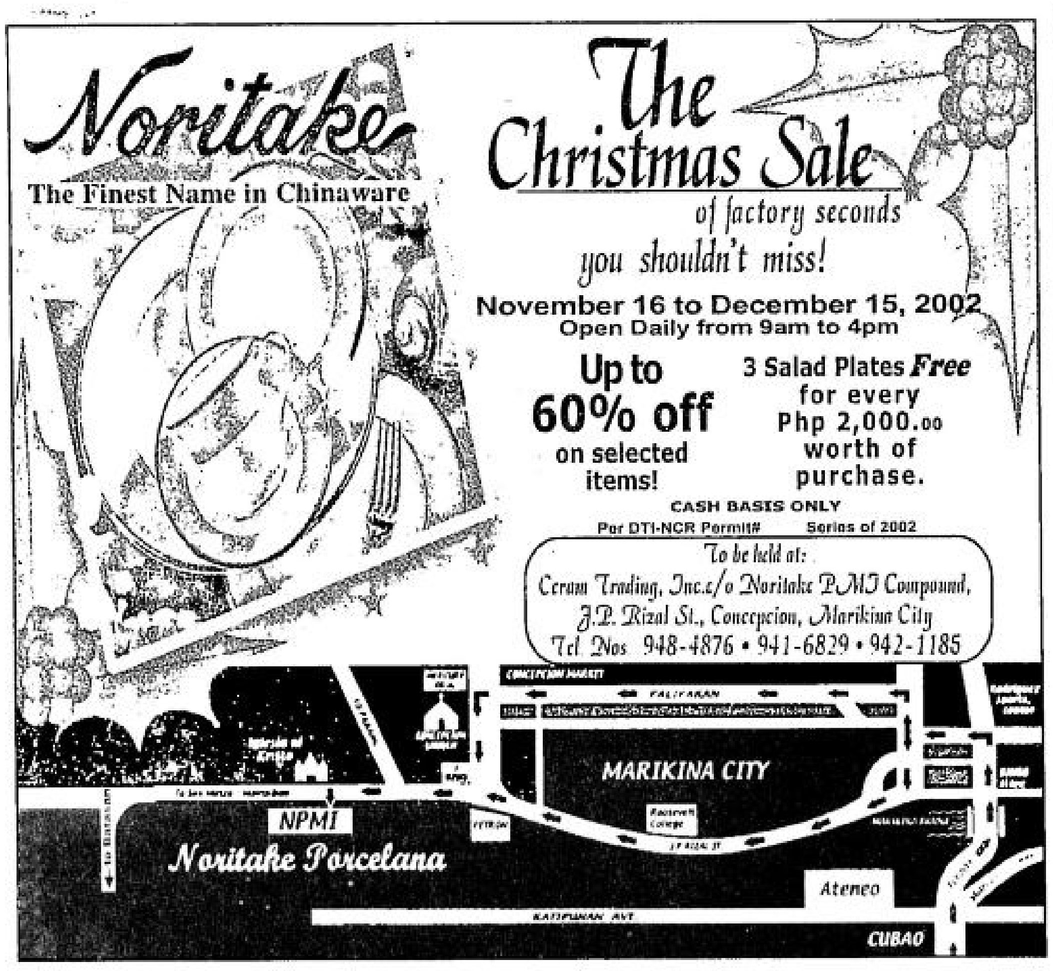

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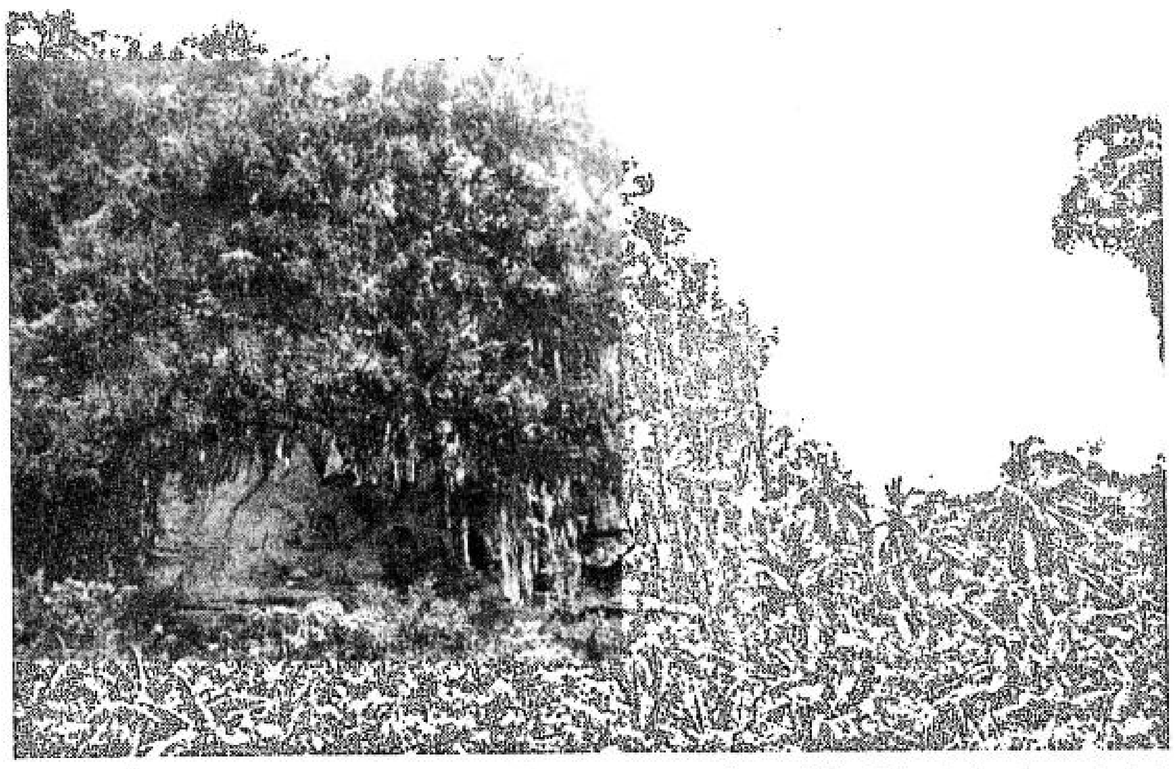
INQUIRER *Visayas*

Editor **Jun Bandayrel** ◎ *Bureau Chief* **Edralyn L. Benedicto**

Christmas wish to save Samar's forests

By Vicente S. Labro
Samar Island

THERE is one thing Samareños want this Christmas—for President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare about a third of the country's third largest island into the Samar Island Natural Park (SINP) this December.



SAMAREÑOS wish their forests, including this limestone mountain, would finally be declared a protected area this December. VICENTE LABRO

The proposed natural park covers 347,000 hectares of contiguous forests and 123,000 ha of buffer zone, which need to be protected from degradation.

Environmentalists want the SINP declared as protected area especially when more than 36 mining firms have applied for permits to explore and mine in areas inside the proposed park.

Some big logging firms, whose operations were stopped a decade ago, are also reportedly asking Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez to lift the logging moratorium declared in 1989.

It was in 1989 when Samareños became concerned about the environment. Floods and landslides hit Samar Island that year, claiming nearly 100 lives and destroying P100 million worth of crops. Blamed for the disaster then was the rapid forest destruction.

Local environmentalists formed the Samar Alliance and launched a campaign to save and protect the island's remaining forests at all cost.

Their first victory was in 1990 when President Corazon Aquino heeded their call to impose a logging moratorium on Samar Island. Affected were five commercial logging firms with a total concession area of nearly 280,000 ha.

In 1996, they scored another major victory when President Fidel Ramos issued Presidential Proclamation No. 744, declaring the 360,000-ha forest reserve in Samar as a protected area.

That same year, they submitted to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) a concept paper on the conservation of Samar Island's rich bio-diversity.

Proposal

In December 1997, the UNDP-Global Environment Facility granted them $350,000, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, to carry out the preparatory phase and develop a full project proposal for the Samar Island Bio-diversity Project (SIBP).

In July 2000, the UNDP, DENR and National Economic Development Authority approved the SIBP Document.

The project was launched on July 16, 2001, with the aim to protect the island's diverse habitat and biological resources as well as to develop livelihood opportunities and provide knowledge on bio-diversity conservation and protected area management to forest-edge communities.

One of the strategies adopted during the initial phase of the eight-year SIBP implementation is to establish the SINP as a new protected area.

The presidential declaration and the passage of the SINP law will place the proposed park under the legal and developmental framework of the National Integrated Protected Areas Systems Law (Nipas) or RA 7586.

The park will comprise 18 towns in Eastern Samar, four in Northern Samar and 13 in Samar including Calbayog City.

Rich bio-diversity

Samar, with a land area of 1.342 million ha, is rich in bio-diversity resources. It has the largest remaining unfragmented tracts of lowland tropical rainforests in the country, which "includes 120,000 ha of primary forest and a large, contiguous tract of secondary forest in good ecological condition."

The island boasts of many caves, river systems and its numerous wildlife species. An Endemic Bird Area, the island is home to at least 197 bird species, 16 of these species are highly threatened like the Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*), and the Philippine Cockatoo (*Cacatua haematuropygta*).

Thirty-nine species of mammal have been recorded on Samar Island, of which 18 are endemic. Among the threatened mammals are two endemic species of fruit bats, one endemic species of insectivorous bat and some endemic large mammals like the Philippine Brown Deer (*Cervus mariannus*) and the Philippine Tarsier.

Also found on the island are 25 species of reptiles and 12 amphibians. Ten of the reptiles and five of the amphibians are endemic.

Samar Island also has 2,400 species of flowering plants including 406 endemic species, 40 of which are found only on the island. Among these are 12 trees listed in the World List of Threatened Trees such as the Quisumbing *gisok* (*Hopea quisumbingiana*) and the Samar *gisok* (*Hopea samarensis*). Included in the threatened plants found in Samar is the rare *Rafflesia manillana*, among others.

Deforestation

Unfortunately, the island's rich bio-diversity is threatened by unabated forest destruction. In 1987, Samar's remaining forest cover was only about 25 percent of the island's total land area.

Since the 1950s, more than 60 percent of the island's forest cover has been lost due to logging and conversion of forest lands to agriculture and human settlements.

According to the SIBP, about 112,000 people reside within and along the buffer zone of the Samar Island Forest reserve as of May 2000.

Most of them earn less than P30,000 a year, well below the regional poverty threshold.

About 90 percent of these forest-edge dwellers depend on the forest for their survival. They indulge in slash-and-burn farming, timber cutting, rattan, bamboo, abaca gathering and tapping of almaciga resin.

Given this, the dilemma is how to balance man's economic needs with nature's ecological vulnerability.

One solution is to provide a way where forest-edge communities will be able to prosper alongside the wilderness without encroaching on it.

This is what the SINP offers: the new protected area will be zoned for multiple uses. The SIBP's land use and management plan divides the SINP into the following zones:

- Strict protection zone—closed for economic activities, except for scientific purposes;
- Sustainable use zone—sustainable economic activities are allowed such as regulated harvesting, collecting, and gathering of renewable resources;
- Multiple use zone—areas where settlements, farming, agroforestry, extraction activities and other livelihood may be allowed and land tenure may be granted; and
- Buffer zone—upland agriculture, agroforestry, settlements, tree farms/plantation and other agri-based activities are allowed in this area.

Implementation

Forester George Guillermo, SIBP manager, said the proposed SINP will be managed by a Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) that will perform dual functions of executive and policy making.

The PAMB will immediately be formed once President Macapagal-Arroyo issues the executive proclamation for the SINP, he added.

The PAMB members will come from the local government, non-government agencies, non-government groups, people's organizations, upland communities and other sectors.

It will be chaired by the DENR and co-chaired by the provincial governor. A Protected Area Superintendent Office and Village Conservation Committees will also be created.

Guillermo said the eight major watershed areas within the proposed park will be used as basis in the planning and management of the SINP.

If properly managed, the watersheds will ensure the sustainable flow of water and at the same time reduce soil erosion and minimize the occurrence of floods, he added.

Since its launch last year, the SIBP has already conducted consultations in most communities. It has started preparing the documents for the executive proclamation and legislative enactment of the SINP.

The SIBP has also been conducting bio-diversity assessment and monitoring, among others.

Rosario Nabong Cabardo, executive director of Tandaya Foundation and SIBP co-chair, said the villagers and local chief executives who attended the consultations, expressed support to the SIBP and to the creation of the SINP.

She said all five Samar congressmen are also very supportive of the SIBP.

Representatives Antonio Nachura and Reynaldo Uy of Samar; Harlin Cast. Abayon and Romualdo Vicencio of Northern Samar; and Marcelino Libanan of Eastern Samar jointly authored House Bill 4764, seeking the SINP's establishment.

Leyte Rep. Eduardo K. Veloso, House committee chair on environment, is also an author of HB 4764. Veloso had already called for committee hearings and had joined in major consultation meeting about the SINP held recently in Tacloban City, Leyte and attended by several mayors of the three Samar provinces.

It was learned that Senator Robert Jaworski, chair of the environment committee, was initiating the passage of the Senate version of the SINP bill.

It has been over a decade now since Cabardo and the other local environmentalists bonded together to work for the conservation and protection of the island's remaining forests.

But with the declaration of the SIBP, their effort to save and restore the environment will continue even to the next generation.

Better than soap operas

BREAKAWAY

Ivan Suansing

SUING for time to reassess the "volatile situation," President Macapagal-Arroyo says she finds Cebu politics too complicated for comfort.

Cebuanos find it entertaining.

In fact, politics here is as good as, if not better than, the top-rated prime-time soaps that have a lock on dinnertime of the Filipino household.

Excerpts from two letters, published in local papers last Nov. 15 and 16, show why.

Letter 1:

"Dear Father,

"When I embarked upon this quest of mine to seek the governorship, I knew that there would be a political price to pay.

"But with the statements that you, my Father, made today, the cost has risen higher than I can bear. So to you, my Father, I make this simple appeal.

"Forgive me. If there is anything that I have said or done to hurt you . . . I apologize. I pray that one day you will understand my need to follow a path of my own creation, perhaps, you may take pride in what I have achieved as your son.

"Humbly your son,

"John H. Osmena Jr."

Letter 2:

"Dear John-john,

"Got a copy of your letter.

"Why couldn't you write to me privately? And why address me as 'Father' when you always call me 'Dad'?

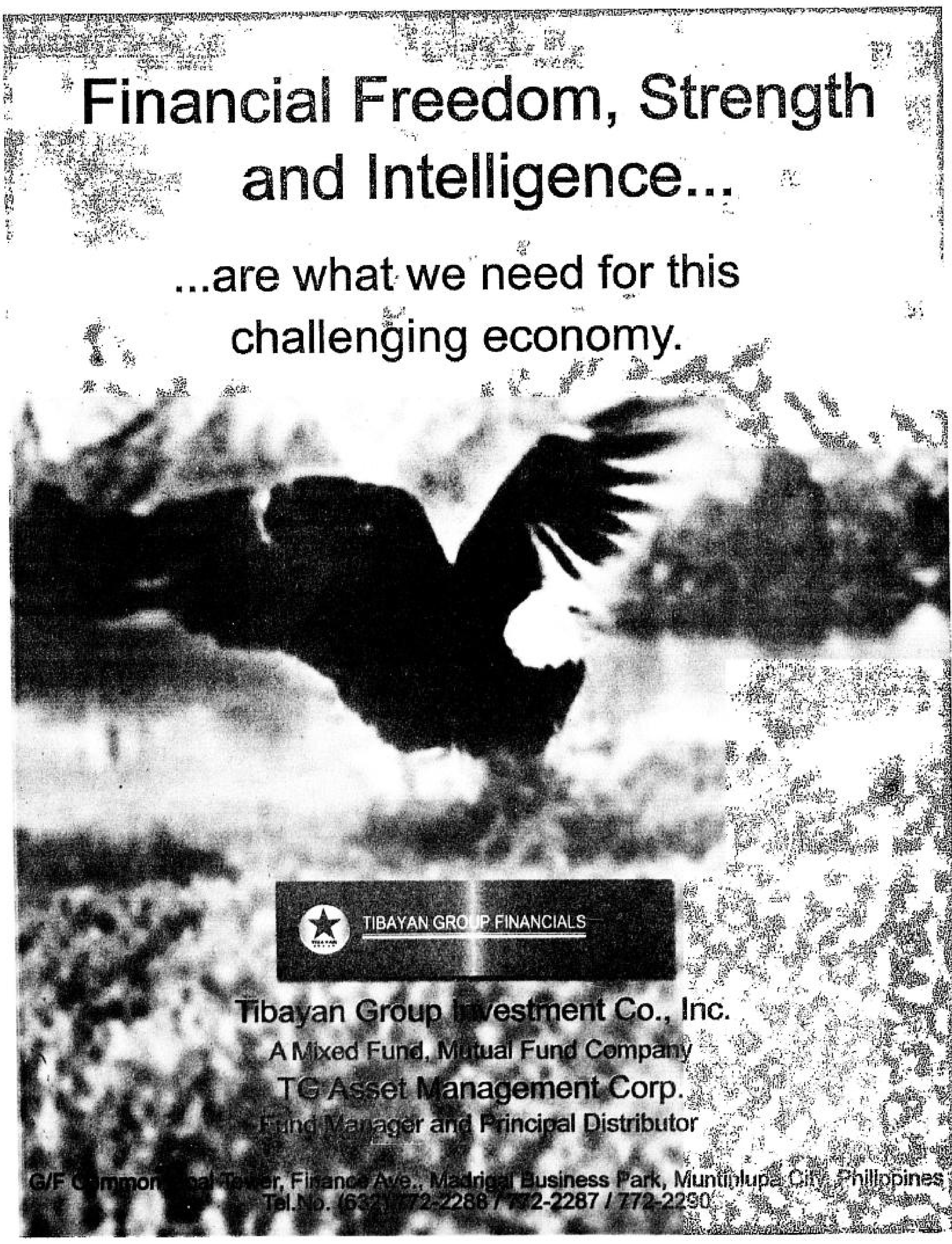
"During all those times that you were issuing irreverent, disrespectful and defiant statements that made you appear like an ingrate, I knew that this was not the real John-john. I knew that you are just a young boy rashly and unwisely acting under the influence of Governor Pablo Garcia and his 47-year-old daughter Gwen.

"When this is over, and I know it will be, you will have learned a bitter lesson in politics: There is no shortage of unscrupulous manipulators who will use you for their own ends. Beware!

"There is a saying in Cebuano: *Bisan unsa katas-a sa prosesyon, sa simbahan da pauli gihapon* (No matter how long the procession is, it will still end up in the church). When you do, I trust that you will be a wiser man.

"Dad."

You see?



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Gov't pulling all stops to make RP safe—GMA

From page A1

could not be faulted if it chose to give prime importance to the safety of its citizens over the negative image that the closure of its embassy would project on the Philippines.

"It's a reminder that each country has its own interest," he said.

Tiglao also said Philippine authorities were considering putting up an "embassy row" where diplomatic missions would be concentrated. He said this would make it easier to secure these facilities from terrorist threats.

Even earlier

The President said in her speech that even before the attacks in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, the Philippine government had been waging a war on terrorism, principally against the Abu Sayyaf bandit group that the US government had linked to the al-Qaida terror network.

"You will recall that the Abu Sayyaf was able to generate at least $20 million in ransom from Sipadan (an island in Malaysia where it abducted a group of mostly European tourists), which strengthened their capability for terror," she said. "But with our decisive response to 9/11, we gained foreign allies in our war against terror."

Ms Macapagal also said her administration had whittled the fighting strength of the Abu Sayyaf from thousands to hundreds and even killed its spokesperson, Abu Sabaya, in June.

"In our war against terror, we look out primarily for our own interests," she said. "This includes making common cause with countries where those interests materially overlap."

SPECIAL PNP unit has been formed dedicated to the security of the embassies, the envoys and their families as well as their residences. ERIK ARAZAS

AFP knew but didn't act on terror threats

From page A1

"It's not that they are apprehensive over our security capabilities," a DFA source said. "Their embassies' location is more their concern. They think that the location will be attacked."

Jan De Kok, head of the EU delegation, said their office had received no direct threats and only closed because of a terror warning to the neighboring Australian Embassy.

He said the mission was "almost operating 100 percent" on other premises and that they hoped to return to their old office in Makati soon.

Australian Ambassador Ruth Pearce told reporters that she informed Foreign Secretary Blas Ople of the decision to close the Australian Embassy before it was announced.

She said the Thursday closure was a top-level decision relayed by the Australian foreign ministry to the mission in Manila.

Asked to comment on the displeasure of Philippine officials, she said: "I understand. I already had discussions with Foreign Secretary Ople and conveyed information and concerns."

Pearce maintained that the decision to close was also done to protect the Filipino staff and other locals who could be affected by a terrorist attack on the embassy.

"We informed the (DFA) before the decision was made public... We appreciate the cooperation being accorded by the Philippine government with regard to the security," the ambassador said.

She said that the morale of the embassy employees was high and that they were willing to work additional hours to take care of urgent business in light of the security threat.

Upset

Cabinet officials are upset that the Australian and Canadian governments had closed their embassies on the basis of intelligence information on terror threats that they refused to divulge.

What caught their ire were the words "civil disorder" in the Australian advisory that accompanied the closure of the embassy, of which the Philippine government was informed only 12 hours earlier.

"We strongly protested their advisory that mentioned civil disorder," National Security Adviser Roilo Golez told reporters. "How could (they) mention civil disorder? What civil disorder are (they) talking about? This is grossly inaccurate and unfair."

Golez said that in a meeting Thursday night with the Canadian and Australian envoys, Cabinet officials gave them "a piece of our mind."

"(The ambassadors) did not apologize but explained that it was necessary because of a report," he said, adding:

"They said that such will not happen again, but the damage has been done. I told them that that was not an act of a friendly nation."

But Lozada said: "We cannot blame them because they gave us advanced information and we did not improve our intelligence gathering."

He said the latest information that prompted the closure "grew from the initial information."

"It may be unbecoming of me as chair of the House foreign relations committee, to say this, but (the closures) are products of our own making," he said in a news forum at Rembrandt Hotel.

He said there were no "forward-looking intelligence strategies" that could have addressed the fears of domestic and foreign entities.

Lozada said the closure of the two embassies meant that the foreign governments had lost hope and trust in the Philippine government to protect them.

"They are willing to take this very drastic action, which means that they didn't want to share the information with us," he said, adding that it was the first time in his 25 years in the foreign service that he witnessed unannounced closures of foreign missions.

He noted that even when embassies relocated to other buildings, a notice was given first to the Office of the President so that the premises could be inspected and cleared of threats.

Breakdown of confidence

"Somebody should take this seriously," Marcos said. "It indicates a complete breakdown of confidence in our ability to protect their interests."

She noted that there had been a build-up of information that prompted the closure.

She said that just a week ago, security guards twice noticed "young Arab-looking men on skateboards" hanging around certain buildings in Makati and taking video footage.

The embassies, she said, were also spooked by protest rallies of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno following the EU declaration of Jose Ma. Sison and the New People's Army as terrorist.

She also cited "additional information" that Islamic radicals planned to attack targets on the highway access to Makati, specifically along Ayala and Paseo de Roxas, "between now and Dec. 6, which is near the end of Ramadan."

But Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles denounced the leak of "raw intelligence information" that, he said, heightened public anxiety.

"We are scaring and stabbing ourselves," Nograles said.

But he echoed Lozada and Marcos' call for the government to take the threats seriously, saying that it "must act swiftly" and that "damage control is necessary."

Leyte Rep. Ted Failon said the move of the Canadian and Australian governments showed their lack of confidence in the Philippine government.

"(It's an) outright statement that they do not have the smallest degree of confidence in the capability of the government to respond to possible terrorist attacks," he said in a statement.

Special unit

Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., chief of the Philippine National Police, ordered the formation of a special unit to oversee the security of embassies, ambassadors and their official residences in Manila.

"His directive is that a unit and an official should be dedicated to oversee the security of the embassies," said Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay, deputy chief for operations.

Aglipay said the unit would harmonize the operations of the Police Security and Protection Office (PSPO) and the city-based police.

"The thrust of the PNP chief is that this will be permanent," he said. "All the embassies will be covered . . . Once their problems are resolved, hopefully the (two) embassies will reopen."

Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez, director of the Southern Police District, is being considered to head the unit because most of the embassies are located in Makati, which falls under SPD jurisdiction.

Chief Supt. Prospero Noble, PSPO director, said he had doubled the security of embassies, envoys, their offices and residences following the supposed threats of terror attacks.

"The security system is in place, but we're tightening it. We have to make them feel secure while they're in the country," he said.

Aglipay met with security officers of some of the embassies early yesterday to draw up security measures.

"We were given guidance by the PNP chief to use the three-tiered defense system against terrorism: intelligence, target hardening and crisis management. That's the right strategy for that kind of problem," he said.

An intelligence official who asked not to be named said the Australian and Canadian Embassies refused to share information on the details of the supposed threats.

"They're not telling us anything," he said.

But Ople said diplomats met last night with Philippine law enforcement officials and were impressed by the security plans presented to them.

He said security would be beefed up at the embassy sites at which uniformed policemen and Marine soldiers would stand guard.

"There will be no excessive show of force," he said after emerging from the meeting. "For instance, the Marines will wear their regular uniforms and not their battle fatigues." *With reports from Martin P. Marfil, AFP, Christine O. Avendano*

FPJ . . .

From page A1

"I never even dreamed of running for barangay captain," said actor Fernando Poe Jr. But somehow, he didn't sound so convincing.

In a media conference on Thursday to promote his new movie, Poe said he would be more effective in delivering a meaningful message by being king of the movies than being president of the country. Describing politics as *"magulo"* (messy), he insisted on talking about his movie, "Alamat ng Lawin," rather than discuss his political plans for 2004.

Poe said the issue about his running for president has not affected him although people around him, especially his fans, are excited about the prospects of him running for president.

Before, Poe said, shaking hands with fans was a sign of greetings. "Now, when I shake hands with people, they think that I'm doing it for politics," he said.

In spite of words of encouragement from Estrada and a recently launched signature campaign by the FPJ for President Movement, Poe said he is resisting the pressure.

"I have other matters to think about. Like the upcoming filmfest," he said.

"Alamat ng Lawin" is one of nine intended entries in the Metro Manila Film Festival in December. FPJ Productions is producing the movie.

Poe said he heard of the FPJ for President Movement from his wife, actress Susan Roces, and refused to comment when asked about his thoughts about the group.

Not satisfied with Poe's answer, a reporter asked him what would convince him to run. The actor replied: "Ooops, I didn't say that. That is very misleading." No one in the press conference was sure what he meant by that.

It has been years since FPJ starred in the "Panday" series, a consistent top-grosser in previous Metro film festivals. "Alamat ng Lawin," Poe said, promises to be bigger and better in terms of production and story values.

Poe said he would be very busy this coming month to campaign, not for his candidacy, but for his latest movie.

Poe will be visiting key cities and provinces in the country to promote the movie. He will be in Pampanga on Dec. 18, Davao on Dec. 20, Cebu on Dec. 22 and will join the cast of "Lawin" in a parade all over the city of Manila on Dec. 24. With a schedule like that and a potential box office hit like "Alamat ng Lawin," who needs to campaign for office?

MJ: Leave Gloria, Mike out of mess

From page A1

country despite requests by some congressmen that a hold-departure order be issued against him.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government reacted to Agustin's "Cocktales" column, which claimed that the agency had received a report from Coutts Bank tracing the "Escaler money trail," by first refusing to comment and then eventually releasing a statement. The PCGG said it had "no Coutts Bank report or any other document from Coutts Bank" in its possession.

What it did have, it said, was a report from the Hong Kong police "relating to certain accounts in Coutts Bank." The agency declined to give details.

HK assistance

The PCGG said the Hong Kong police shared the information "in confidence."

"Pursuant to its mandate under the law, the Commission has regularly sought and been given assistance by the Hong Kong Police Force. Such assistance is given pursuant to Hong Kong's law on international legal assistance," the PCGG statement read.

"In the course of obtaining and providing such assistance to the Republic of the Philippines, the Hong Kong Police Force provided the Commission with a report relating to certain accounts in Coutts Bank."

"The report does not make any legal conclusion. The report was given in confidence," it said.

The PCGG said "the matters contained in the report are not related to the Commission's mandate." The agency, formed right after Edsa I, is tasked to recover and research information on accounts related or involving ill-gotten Marcos wealth or deposits here and abroad.

The PCGG said it had "not released any copy of the report to any person, including the press."

"It will, however, furnish the Ombudsman a copy consistent with the Ombudsman's mandate and for whatever purpose it may serve his office."

In his column, Agustin wrote that, based on the report that the PCGG had, the "Coutts Bank account was opened on Nov. 25, 1998 with Escaler using his Philippine passport (ZZ044701) for identification."

Corrupt nature

In a press briefing, Perez announced that he would present a witness next week who will "reveal the true corrupt" nature of Jimenez.

Perez said his witness had "explosive testimony" that will pin down the lawmaker.

"Next week, I will reveal something that will show the corrupt ways of Congressman Mark Jimenez to enlighten us on his true character," he said.

"What I will reveal will affect the credibility of both Mr. Jimenez and Mr. Willie Villarama," added Perez. Villarama is the Bulacan congressman and close associate of Jimenez who first broke the $2-million story.

Perez asked the media not to force him to reveal the witness' identity for security reasons.

"The witness is now executing an affidavit," said Perez, who also declined to reveal even the witness' gender, or whether the witness was a public official.

The justice secretary also said the public should expect a "tougher Nani" starting next week.

"I'll be on the offensive because by that time papers would have been completed. I'll be starting to file charges against Congressmen Mark Jimenez and Willie Villarama. I have viewed some of the papers and I will give (my lawyers) the go-signal to (file the cases)."

As for Villarama, Perez said he would be charged with perjury and libel—criminal offenses—and a civil case for damages.

Jimenez's challenge

Jimenez brushed aside all challenges by Perez and Escaler for him to produce evidence or issue an authorization.

"We want that account opened and investigated. It's that simple. When that account is opened, we will see where the money went, who is lying and who is telling the truth," he said.

Jimenez said he could not understand why Malacañang has not pushed for the ratification of the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters agreement which Perez signed with Hong Kong on Feb. 3, 2001.

He said the MLA, which needs ratification by the Senate, is the key to opening the account.

Jimenez gave his own answer why Perez sat on the agreement.

"Because that is an instrument for extortion," he said.

Asked where he got his money, Jimenez said his computer companies in Latin America earned $282 million and were the fastest growing US firms in 1993-1995.

Other developments

Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation asked Congress yesterday to force Perez's critics to cooperate with the agency in its ongoing probe.

"I'm sending a letter today to House Speaker Jose De Venecia and the House ethics committee requesting their assistance to convince and persuade Rep. Mark Jimenez and Rep. Willie Villarama to give us copies of their documents," said Wycoco.

Wycoco sent a similar letter to Senate President Franklin Drilon and the chair of the Senate ethics committee to compel Sen. Panfilo Lacson to provide the NBI with documents to prove that Perez indeed received $2 million from Jimenez.

In the Senate, Drilon—himself a lawyer—said that Escaler could not hide behind any protective cloak of confidentiality.

"(Escaler) does not accept the deposit. He is not a depository, he is not protected by any law," Drilon said.

"(Escaler) is a banker without a bank and, therefore, he is not covered by the confidentiality provided in such laws like the Bank Secrecy Law," Drilon said. *With reports from Rocky Nazareno and Volt Contreras*

Palace abuzz over Gloria-Nani 'beso-beso'

From page A1

She did buss Appointments Secretary Mai-Mai Jimenez on the cheek, but simply shook hands with the rest.

Perez was probably so pleased that he agreed to be interviewed by television crews covering the event.

No reporters were allowed at the oath-taking.

In the interview, Perez said he did not believe rumors that presidential legal counsel Avelino Cruz Jr. would replace him.

The speculations were fueled by the President's order to Perez last Tuesday to take a 30-day leave to refute Jimenez's charges.

Dossier on Perez

The INQUIRER earlier reported that the President received a dossier on Perez compiled by a former private lawyer who was recently appointed Supreme Court justice.

A couple of hours before their meeting, Ms Macapagal urged Jimenez to formalize his charges before the Ombudsman.

She also said she has directed the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission to investigate the charges.

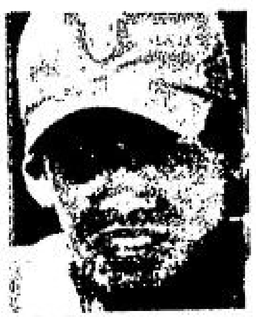
"I appeal to his (Perez's) accuser: rather than filing your charges in the media, file it with the Office of the Ombudsman. Submit your documents and speed up the investigation," Ms Macapagal said during the 2002 Golden Shell Awards for top exporters, which was held in Malacañang.

She had earlier asked Jimenez to use the 30-day period to substantiate his allegations and prove to the public that he is not just trying to delay his extradition to the United States.

"If he (Jimenez) is able to do so, let justice take its course wherever the evidence leads to," Ms Macapagal said.

If he is not able to do so, however, Jimenez should apologize to Perez, Ms Macapagal said.

Juvic keeps lead; Richard 2 behind


PAGUNSAN

STA. BARBARA, Iloilo—As Juvic Pagunsan bravely held on to the lead, local favorite Richard Sinfuego and Benjie Magada repaired the bruised egos of the pros by moving to within two shots of the history-seeking amateur with swashbuckling efforts yesterday in the penultimate round of the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit at the Iloilo Golf and Country Club here.

Pagunsan lost the putting magic that helped him tie the course record of 64 on Thursday but a ho-hum round of two-under-par 68 - his third straight score in the 60s - kept the 24-year-old afloat by two strokes and in the hunt to become the first amateur to top a pro event in nearly 12 years.

While a breakaway seemed imminent after Round 2 when Pagunsan forged ahead by five, Sinfuego and Magada found the way to join the 24-year-old company in an expected dash to the finish in Saturday's finale.

Sinfuego responded to the hometown pressure by becoming the third owner of the course record with his version of 64 pulling him abreast with Magada at 202 in this fourth leg of the pro circuit revival made possible by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo's foundation and San Miguel Beer with the support of WG&A Super Ferry.

With almost everybody in the course rooting for him, Sinfuego treated his family and friends to a birdie exhibition, picking up four in the front and three in the back against a lone three-putt miscue on the ninth.

Magada, out to quench his thirst for victory he last tasted in the Davao leg of the now defunct Philip Morris Circuit four years ago, fell a stroke short of the course mark but his six-birdie 65 gave him a clear shot at the P100,000 winner's prize.

There was no other challenger in sight as first round leader Robert Pactolerin after being entangled with back-nine misfortumes, now lies six strokes off at 206 after a 69. He was on fire after making his third birdie for the day from 25 feet on the ninth only to drop strokes on the 10th and 17th.

12 nations join Jr Masters

SEASONED young players from 12 countries are seeing action in the inaugural Asia-Pacific Junior Masters set Dec. 10-13 at the Legends course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

Featuring players 17 years and under, the tournament will be participated in by host Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the United States.

With about 50 foreign jungolfers already confirmed to arrive, the organizing Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines in coordination with the Asia-Pacific Junior Golf Confederation is still awaiting word from at least three more countries, Sri Lanka, Mainland China and Australia.

Jungolf chair Amalia 'Mommy" Montecillo who heads the organizing committee said that the Philippines has been given the distinct honor of hosting the first edition of the tourney.

Jong Arcano

PSA to honor Filipino top athletes Jan. 10

FILIPINO athletes who have brought honor to the country in international competitions, particularly the last Asian Games and world championships, will be honored when the Philippine Sportswriters Association holds its annual Awards Night Jan. 10 at the Holiday Inn Manila.

PSA president Robert D. Cuevas said the association, the country's oldest news organization founded in 1949, had reached an agreement with Holiday Inn for the staging of the country's most prestigious sports award at the Coral Ballroom of the hotel on UN Avenue, Manila.

Ceremonies start at 7 p.m.

Red Bull and Photokina, which along with Holiday Inn, Pioneer Insurance and Agfa have been sponsors of the weekly PSA Sports Forum are supporting the event which honors the country's major achievers in various sports endeavors during the year.

The other backers are the PSC, Samsung, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

The PSA will present the top award to the Athletes of the Year, who will be voted upon by the regular members of the organization. The top athletes will be chosen from among the gold medalists in this year's Asian Games in Busan, South Korea and in world championships held during the year.

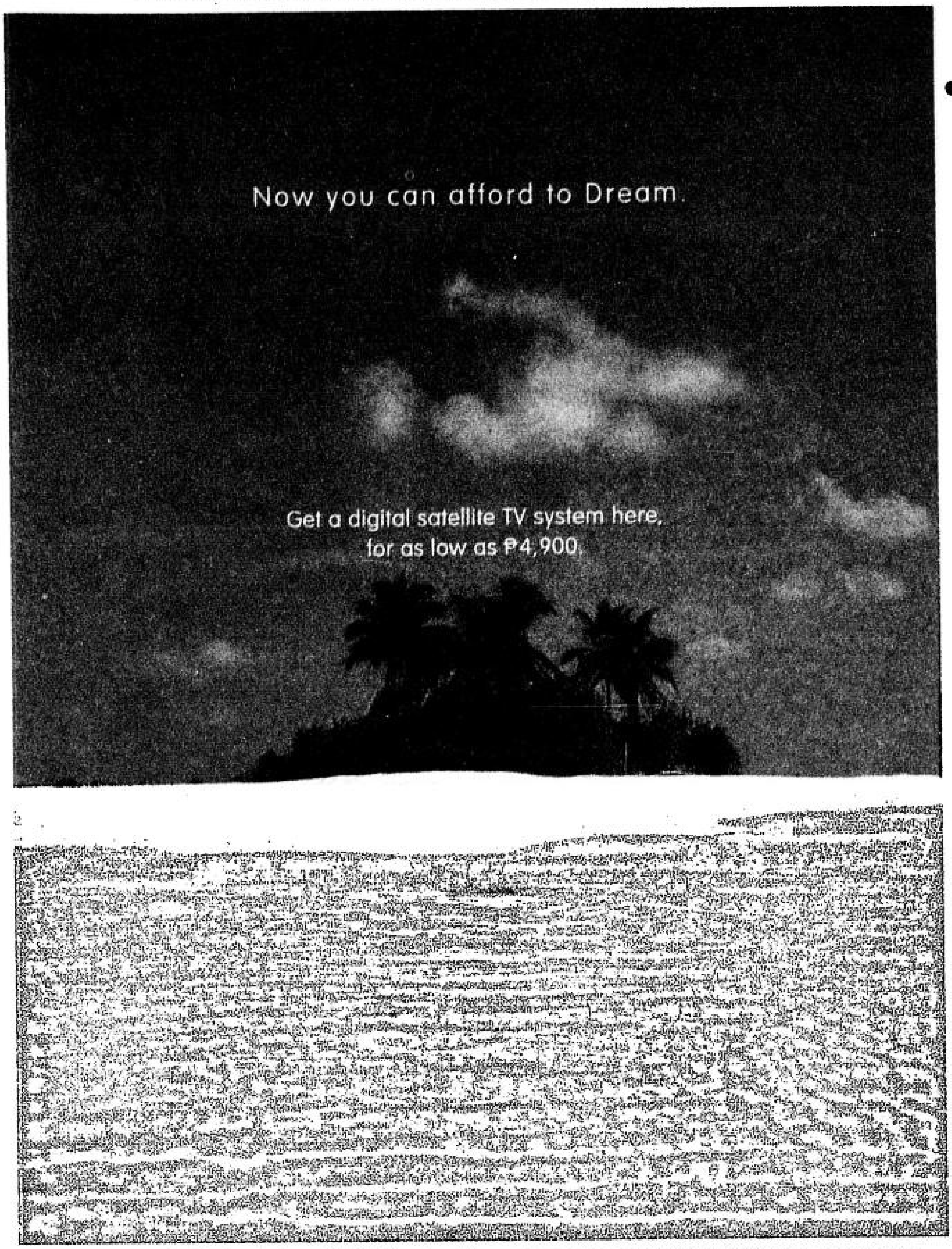
Also to be awarded are the Asian Games silver and bronze medalists and international champions in various sports.

The PSA will also present posthumous awards to former sports greats who passed away in 2002 and corporate sponsors which have made substantial contributions to the promotion of sports on the grassroots level or to the training here and abroad of national athletes.

For the second straight year, the organization will give special awards to former sportswriters who have distinguished themselves in other professions.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Cardino Gonzales fired 577 points to top the air pistol event in the second leg of eliminations for the members of the Philippine team to the 17th SEA Games at the PSC ranges in Ft. Bonifacio.



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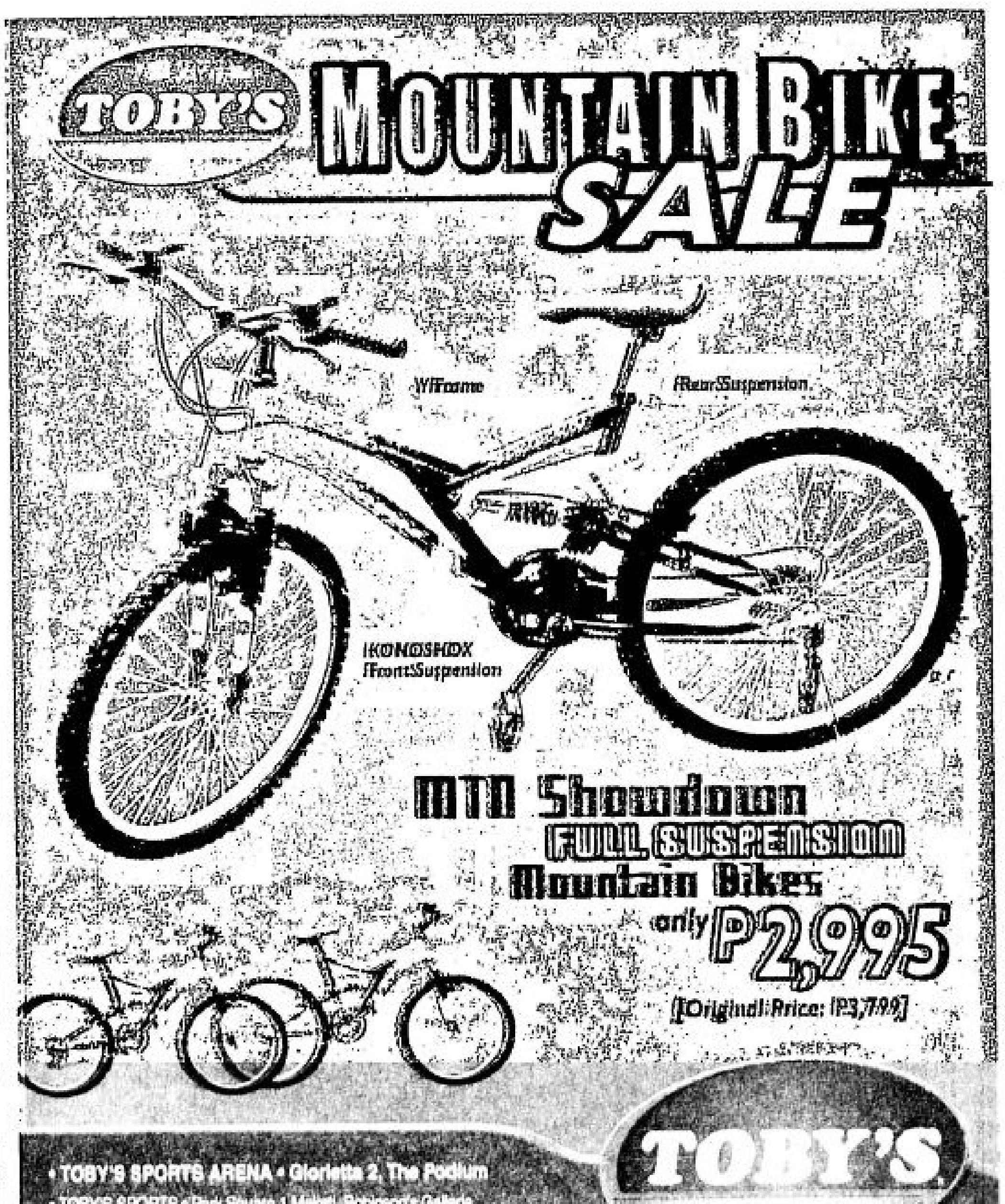

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Promo runs from November 30 to December 31, 2002. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4852, Series of 2002.

Cavite derby submission of weights set

SUBMISSION of weights for the 7-Cock International Derby at the Cavite Coliseum scheduled for Dec. 2, 4 and 6 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) is scheduled one day before the announced fight date.

For the Dec. 2 two-cock opener, weights must be submitted on Sunday (Dec. 1) from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.; for the Dec. 4 two-cock semifinals, 7 a.m. up to 10 p.m. of Tuesday (Dec. 3); and for the Dec. 6 3-cock finals from 7 a.m. up to 10 p.m. of Thursday (Dec. 5).

Participants are given the option to field four cocks either on Monday or Wednesday then followed up by the three cocks for qualifiers to the Friday finals.

Fights start at 7 p.m. sharp on each day with P5,000 penalty for delayed fights. An additional penalty of P5,000 will be imposed for every five fights that the delay continues.

The *casador* (the one in charge of squaring bets) is the popular Abo Centeno while the *sentenciador* (referee) is the respected Berong Javellana.

The gala affair now on its 12th year is hosted by Sen. Ramon B. Revilla and co-hosted by long-time friends Rudy Salud, Nestor Mercado and Lito Orillaza.

Sponsored by Pagcor, the derby's beneficiary is the Philippine Mental Health.

'Bakbakan' tilt a big success

THIS year's edition of the annual "Bakbakan National 7-Stag Derby" which culminated in a grand championship last Nov. 20 and 22 at the Araneta Coliseum, turned out to be the biggest accomplishment so far of the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders.

According to NFGB president Ricoy Palmares, a total of 233 cockers and gamefowl breeders from all over the country joined the event.

CVGBA Flyhigh II of Charlton Uy, Andy Alivia and Bien Bien de Guzman emerged as solo champion after scoring seven straight victories. It was actually a back-to-back victory for the triumvirate from Cagayan Valley.

Champion handlers were Rey and Acoy while Garry Tan was champion gaffer.

The 11 gamefowl breeders associations which took part in the event were the Negros Gamefowl Breeders Association (NGBA), Gamefowl Breeders Association of Negros (GF-Ban), Panay Gamefowl Breeders Association (Pagba), Mindanao Gamefowl Breeders Association (Cegba), Cebu Gamefowl Breeders and Cockers Association (CGBBA), Nueva Ecija Gamefowl Breeders Association (Negba), United Ilocandia Gamefowl Breeders Association (Unigba), Cagayan Valley Gamefowl Breeders Association (CGVBA), Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association (LGBA) and National Cockers Association (NCA).

NFGB is composed of Ricoy Palmares (president), Otic Geroso (vice president), Juancho Aguirre (treasurer), Jessie Ledesma (secretary), Nitoy Nasser (auditor) and directors Lancey dela Torre, Homer Salgado, Freddie Yulo, Allan Lucasan and Arnel Anonuevo.

Las Piñas 7-cock tourney slated

BIG-TIME cockfighting shifts to the Las Piñas Cockpit on Dec. 14 and 16 with the staging of "Enkuwentro Sa Las Piñas 7-Cock Derby."

Cash prize at stake is P1 million while entry fee is P22,000. Derby host is businessman-sportsman Gerry Ramos, who has invited 40 participants so far.

Submission of weights for the 3-cock eliminations on Dec. 14 is strictly one day before derby, from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. Interested parties may contact 873-1040 for details (Gerry or Rudy).

4As to promote local tourism

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ORGANIZERS of the Asian track and field championships or the 4As meet yesterday said they hope to help promote tourism in the country by staging the event where at least 1,000 foreign athletes and officials are due next year.

In its own little way, the Asian championship is counted upon to showcase the "good things" about the country amid the growing threats of terrorism which prompted the Canadian and Australian embassies to close shop this week.

The Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association which has been in close coordination with the Philippine Sports Commission are in thick of preparation to bring the championships here in the country for the first time since 1993.

PSC chair Eric Buhain earlier threw his full support to the event in view of the Philippines' drive to promote itself and attract tourists and foreign investors through sports.

PALAWAN READY

Batang Pinoy on tomorrow

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE COUNTRY's best young athletes fight for honors as the 4th Philippine National Youth Games unfurl tomorrow behind a festive atmosphere at the Palawan Sports Complex in Sta. Monica Heights, Puerto Princesa City.

Popularly known as Batang Pinoy, the week-long sportsfest will feature athletes 12 years and below. They will compete in 21 disciplines which include golf, athletics, triathlon, weightlifting, taekwondo, karatedo, volleyball, table tennis, softball, swimming, arnis, judo and gymnastics.

Four hundred and eighty-two gold medals are at stake in the sports extravaganza which is certain to bring the luster back into Palawan's tourism industry.

Manila will try to make it two-in a row in the battle for overall honors. Laguna, Cebu and Negros Occidental are expected to figure prominently in the race for supremacy.

Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes, Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn have their support in this undertaking which is also being held under the supervision of the Philippine Sports Commission headed by Eric Buhain.

Meanwhile, Puerto Princesa City is in a fiesta-like atmosphere as delegates of local government units, athletes and officials arrived in batches. Streets are adorned with red buntings, while colorful banners and streamers decorate almost every corner of the city's main district.

Delegates from Cebu and other cities and provinces in the Visayas arrived yesterday through a special flight of Air Philippines.

The bulk of the more than 4,000 delegates are expected to arrive today through Negros Navigation and WG&A ships.

The Batang Pinoy Task Force was immediately created to provide for swift but smooth preparation. The main track at the Puerto Princesa City-Palawan Sports Complex is almost 100 per cent complete, according to Batang Pinoy overall committee chair Vicky de Guzman.

With reports from Jofelle Tesorio and Ruelle Albert D. Castro, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

IOC sets up anti-terror fund

MEXICO CITY–The fear of terrorism wrecking future Olympic Games has forced the International Olympic Committee to set up a special multimillion dollar contingency fund. The fund would allow the IOC to keep functioning if Games revenues failed to materialize. "International terrorism poses certain risks. Armed conflict and problems of the economic crisis may all have an effect on the staging and quality of the Games," IOC president Jacques Rogge told the 114th IOC Session which opened here on Thursday. AFP

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*ABEC is an acronym for Annular Bearing Engineering Committee, a committee that sets the standards and requirements for the ABEC ratings.

OLYMPIAN Jennifer Chan, Asian Games veteran Marvin Cordero and multititled compound bow bet Raul Ramon Arambulo bagged a gold medal each in the 18-meter distance Thursday at the start of the four-day national archery target championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Carrying the colors of Silliman U-Dumaguete, Chan tallied 571 points to beat Rachelle AnneCabral (554) and Joann Tabañag (550), while Cordero of Canama carded 565 points to whip Arnold Rojas (556) and Christian Cubilla (555) in the women's and men's recurve competitions.

Arambulo of 1PK Blue posted 570 points to pull away from Earl Yap of 1PK Green (557) and Enrique Fernandez of 1PK Red (552) in the compound bow division.

The other early gold medalists in the 18-meter distance (standard round) of the tourney organized by the National Archery Association of the Philippines and supported by the Philippine Sports Commission were Melanie Teresa Gagtan of UP Baguio and Romualdo Cascayan of Inac.

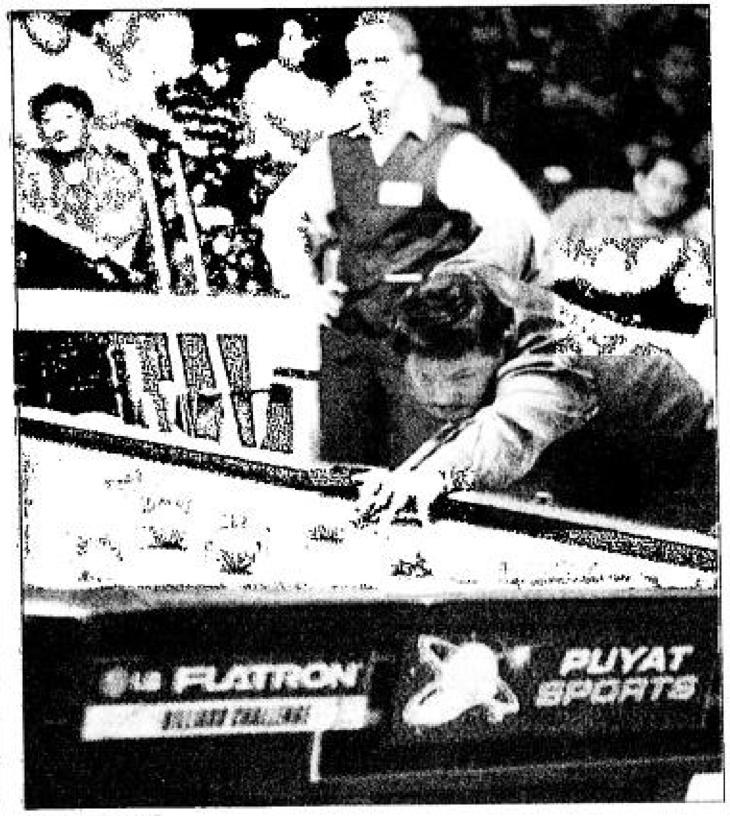
Welcoat faces LBC

GAMES TODAY *(Lipa City)*
2 p.m.—Cheeseballs-Shark vs John O
5 p.m.—Welcoat vs LBC-Batangas

FRONTRUNNING Welcoat meets LBC-Batangas today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Lipa City Youth Cultural Center.

This will be the second time this conference that the PBL will hold its games in Lipa City. Batangueños are expected to come in droves to cheer for the Blades, who are sporting a 4-1 card and sharing second place with the Blu Detergent Kings.

The LBC-Welcoat game is set at 5 p.m. after the 2 p.m. clash between Cheeseballs-Shark and John O. Philip Cezar will make his debut as Shark mentor. *Dennis U. Eroa*



FINALIST
Efren "Bata" Reyes prepares to make his shot as his opponent, Mika Immonen, watches. Reyes won, 9-6, to reach the finals of the LG Flatron Billiards Challenge 2 at Casino Filipino in Parañaque. ROGER MARGALLO

Tuason Memorial Cup on

ALL is set for the 3rd Arthur Tuason Memorial Cup where the country's next batch of talented drivers will display their wares today (Nov. 30) at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Participants in this event presented by Standard Insurance and sponsored by Bridgestone Tyres, Hanjin Shipping, Carmona Circuit Philippines, Alaska Fresh, Drive Concept Wheels, Trapik.com and Magic 89.9 will be competing for titles in the Bridgestone KT Novice class and the Alaska Fresh Cadet category.

The Bridgestone KT Novice class is open to all newcomers and karting enthusiasts where a top prize of P40,000 and Drive Mag Wheels await the winner.

Drive Mag Wheels will be awarded to the runner-up while the third placer, will get gift packs.

Alaska Fresh Cadet Division is open to kids aged 8 to 13 where the champion will receive race sponsorship for the 2003 season.

The runner-up and the third placer will receive gift packs and trophies.

The said event is held in honor of racing legend Arthur Tuason–a well respected racing figure who made waves both in the local and international scene during the '70s.

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SPORTS

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SPORTSTV Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA, 9 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), ESPN, Washington vs Indiana, 9 a.m., Solar Sports
NBA Inside Stuff, 5 p.m. (r), Star Sports
GOLF: World Amateur Golf Team Championships 2002, 11 a.m. (r), Star Sports
PGA Grand Slam of Golf 2002, 1 p.m. (r), Star Sports
Nedbank Golf Challenge 2002, 5:30 p.m., Star Sports
BOWLING: Aviva Asian Bowling Tour, 4 p.m., ESPN
POOL: Rack 'Em Up, 5 p.m. (r), ESPN
BILLIARDS: 2002 Sudden Death 7-Ball, 6 p.m., ESPN

Fil-Ams cause PBA attendance decline–Jolas

Thunder win

GAMES TODAY *(Ynares Center)*
5:30 p.m.– Sta. Lucia vs Alaska
7:30 p.m.–Shell vs San Miguel

RED Bull formalized its entry to the semifinals with an 84-67 win over skidding Barangay Ginebra in the PBA Selecta All-Filipino Cup last night at the Astrodome.

The Thunder upped their record to 7-1, while Ginebra dropped to 3-5.

Coca-Cola beat Talk N Text, 92-84, in the second game to boost its record to 6-3. Coca Cola fell to 4-4.

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE EXPECTED bombshell did not happen as Jojo Lastimosa, spokesperson of the PBA Players union, yesterday declined to name names in the brewing Fil-Am controversies.

Instead, Lastimosa, a 16-year PBA veteran, whose slam-dunking prowess and bulging thighs once attracted multitude of near-fanatical fans at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum, said he is keeping his mouth shut and let Sen. Robert Barbers, head of the Senate committee on games and amusement, do the talking.

"Sen. Barbers will come out with the answers," said Lastimosa during the SCOOP Forum at the Kamayan Restaurant in West Avenue.

Barbers has already ordered the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation to produce papers submitted by the Fil-Ams.

Sen. John Osmeña, one of the three senators who filed a resolution to initiate the probe, said that with the document, the committee will be able to examine more closely and on a case-to-case basis the authenticity of the Fil-Am claims.

Lastimosa, 38, and other veteran players have spearheaded moves to revive the non-performing union. They are trying to look into the eligibility of Fil-Am dribblers and the players' trust fund.

Lastimosa's group also wants to have a seat in the powerful board of governors, a move which gained stiff opposition from team owners and representatives.

Despite his decision to refrain from talking, Lastimosa confirmed the presence of fake Fil-Ams in the league. He clarified that his group isn't envious of the Fil-Ams. "Some of them are my friends and I know that some local players get higher pay than the Fil-Ams. Our group wants to get rid of the "fakes."

"I always believe that Fil-Ams have the right to play here as long as their papers are legal. This issue is not new," Lastimosa said.

Lastimosa, however, said that the dwindling PBA attendance can be attributed to the growing Fil-Am population in the pros.

"I've asked fans and they were one in saying that the presence of Fil-Ams have forced them to shy away from the games. But other things should also be considered. The economy is also a reason why less fans are watching the games.

Lastimosa noted that authentic Fil-Ams can easily get their papers from the Department of Justice . The guidelines are in place and it's about strictly following the rules.

LASTIMOSA R. CARPIO

INDIANA Pacer forward Jermaine O'Neal slams one home in the second half against the Dallas Mavericks. AFP

NBA RUN SNAPPED

Indiana denies Dallas spot in record books

By Chris Sheridan
AP Basketball Writer

INDIANAPOLIS—The Dallas Mavericks were denied a spot in the NBA record books Thursday when their 14 game winning streak was broken by the Indiana Pacers.

Indiana got 26 points from Jermaine O'Neal and inspired efforts from Al Harrington, Brad Miller and Ron Artest to defeat the Mavericks 110-98.

The Pacers prevented Dallas (14-1) from matching the 1948-49 Washington Capitols and 1993-94 Houston Rockets for the best start to a season in NBA history—15-0.

Artest scored 20 points, including Indiana's first 10, while Harrington scored 21 on 9-of-12 shooting and Miller added 16 on 7-of-8 shooting.

O'Neal grabbed 18 rebounds and Artest had 10, helping the Pacers to a 54-36 advantage on the boards. Indiana improved the East's best record to 12-2.

"In order to win this game, you're going to have to use everything you have from a strategy standpoint, because they're the best team in the NBA right now," Pacers coach Isiah Thomas said before the game.

The Pacers indeed came up with a plan to attack the Mavericks, finding ways to get the ball inside no matter what kind of defense Dallas was playing.

The Pacers went straight to the basket right from the beginning, with Artest scoring their first 10 points—eight on layups, the other two on free throws after he was fouled underneath.

Dallas used an 11-2 run to erase an early 10-point deficit and take a 24-23 lead, but the Mavericks weren't able to keep the momentum. Reggie Miller hit a 3-point shot and then scored on a layup off a steal by Artest to make it 47-39.

Steve Nash led the Mavericks with 29 points, nine assists and seven rebounds. Dirk Nowitzki shot just 4-for-20, Finley was 7-for-20 and the Mavericks shot 38 percent, compared with Indiana's 54 percent.

Clippers 126, Nets 118, OT

In Los Angeles, Andre Miller equaled a career high with 37 points, and Elton Brand made a three-point play to give Los Angeles a win over New Jersey.

Miller, who also had a season-high 16 assists, forced overtime by making a 3-pointer in the final 4.9 seconds of fourth quarter to tie it at 111-111.

Brand, who had 21 points, eight rebounds and four blocked shots, put the Clippers on top 118-116 with 3:02 remaining. Michael Olowokandi, who had 14 points, nine rebounds and five blocks, made four free throws in the final minute to clinch the victory.

Solar telecast

MICHAEL Jordan and the Washington Wizards seek revenge against Reggie Miller and the Indiana Pacers live at 9 a.m. today (Saturday, Nov. 30) on the Solar Sports Network (Channel 29 on Skycable and Homecable). Replay is set at 7 p.m.

Jordan sets 3rd, final retirement

WASHINGTON—Michael Jordan says he will retire for the third and final time after this season and resume his role as partial owner of the Washington Wizards.

Jordan told reporters after practice Thursday that there is "zero chance" of him coming back again, The Washington Post and the Carroll County (Maryland) Times reported.

"I tell you right now that I'm just fulfilling my contract," said Jordan, who signed a two-year, $2.1 million deal with Washington last year after stepping down from his executive duties. Jordan, who will turn 40 in February, returned to basketball last season because he said he still felt the need to compete. *AP*

Spring, Trinity beat Picaa opponents

SPRING Cooking Oil and Trinity College scored contrasting wins at the start yesterday of the 2002 Picaa-YKL Invitational Cup Basketball Championship at the Manila Downtown YMCA Gym in Binondo.

Spring routed Wang's Ballclub, 97-80, while Trinity College nipped RP-Burlington, 81-79, to take the headstart in this six-team tournament organized by the Philippine Integrated Chinese Athletic Association and sanctioned by the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

YKL Color Films general manager Robert T.Lim graced the ceremonial game along with BAP secretary general Graham C. Lim.

My kind of guy

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THERE are short and long meetings. I always prefer the short ones. They are almost devoid of private meetings within the private meeting. Less talk, no waste of time.

Seemingly, that's Anthony R. de Leon's style.

Anthony, the youthful deputy manager of the Baguio Country Club, presided over a meeting yesterday, one that centered on the last major kink of the 53rd Fil-Am Golf Invitational: Today's captain's meeting. Anthony cochairs the tournament with Heiner L. Maulbecker of Camp John Hay. Lawyer Federico R. Agcaoili of BCC and Robert John L. Sobrepena of John Hay are honorary chairmen of the event.

Anthony did it so well no one from the 15 or so distinguished ladies and gentlemen gathered for the occasion (among them Mike Anton, Jeric Hechanova, Toots Aquino, Shean Bedi, Ryan Pantaleon, Adrian Flores and Nanette P. Filler) had a query that was left unanswered. Or unresolved.

The meeting was called at 3 p.m. It promptly started at 3 p.m. It was over in maybe 40 minutes. Flawless almost. Had you answered either a call from your cell phone or a text message during the meeting, you would have been a goner; you'd have missed a ton of salient points from Anthony's wealth of information. Like a top-notch reporter, Anthony was direct to the point, concise but with clarity ringing in his message; he delivered it without pomposity to the key members of the tournament committee who would run the world's biggest golf tournament from Dec. 2 to Dec. 7 at both the Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay.

It was so short a meeting you'd think nothing consequential had been discussed, or arrived at. But no. Everything was covered. Thoroughly. It was like the executioner doing his thing with the guillotine: It's done in the wink of an eye.

"Our Tournament chairman, Mr. Taby Tabaniag, will preside over the captains' meeting tomorrow," Anthony said. "I wish him well."

My Insan Taby, as always, was more than par for the occasion.

"I will not tolerate any organized confusion tomorrow," Taby said. "We have set the rules for the tournament. We will inform the captains about the rules and tournament format. All they need to do is follow."

A few minutes later, the meeting was adjourned.

Short but sweet. My kind of guy, this Anthony.

Fil-Am officially kicks off today

THE 53rd Fil-Am Golf Invitational tournament officially kicks off today with the traditional ceremonial tee-off at Camp John Hay (4 p. m.) and at Baguio Country Club (5 p. m.). Also on tap is the team captains' meeting.

Smart Communications is the presenter of the golfest slated Dec. 2-7. Awarding ceremony of the event will be held at the CAP-John Hay Cultural and Trade Center of Camp John Hay

"We are honored that the organizers of the annual tournament chose to hold the awards rites at the CAP-John Hay Cultural and Trade Center," said Camp John Hay Golf Club general manager Heiner Maulbecker yesterday.

Major sponsors of the meet are CAP (College Assurance Plan), Northwest Airlines, Royal Caribbean Cruise, Wilson, Premiere Wines, JPDC, BCDA and San Miguel Corp. Other backers are Bluecross, Caltex, Pizza Hut-Baguio City and U-Bix Corp.

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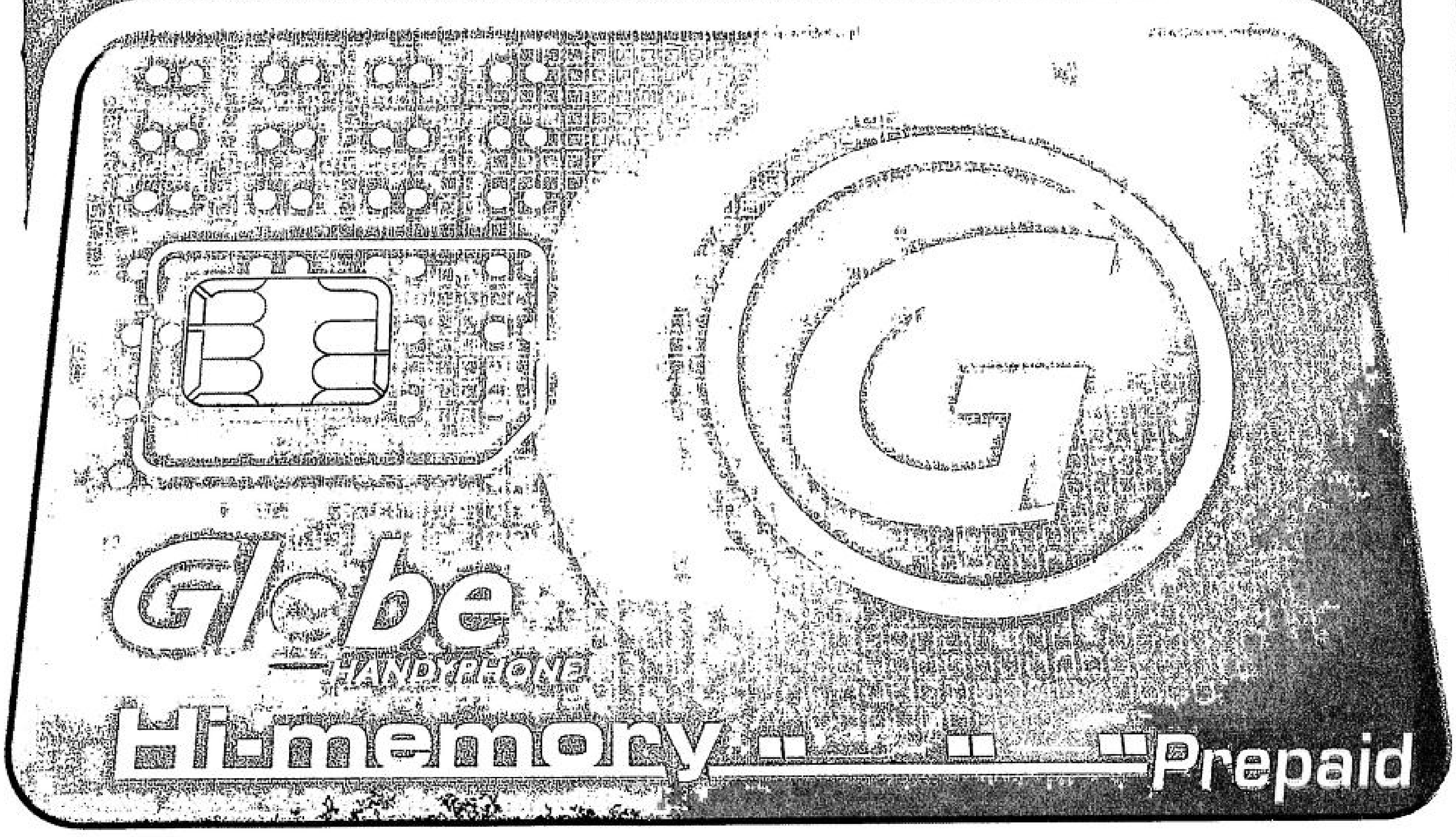

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■ Cebedos won't seek justice /A30

Scion alive, freed!

By Tina Santos

POLICE, happily, had the wrong theory.

Selecta Feeds executive Danilo Bautista, who was forcibly taken by heavily armed men, is alive.

He was freed by his abductors on Thursday after the fee for his execution was not paid by the alleged mastermind.

Bautista, who was held by his captors for 54 hours, was dumped off a rice field in Pulilan, Bulacan around 7 a.m. Thursday.

He was unharmed but hogtied and blindfolded, according to Northern Police District Office (NPDO) director Senior Supt. Marcelino Franco Jr.

Supt. Dionicio Borromeo, Caloocan Police intelligence and investigation division chief, who earlier hinted Bautista could have been slain by his captors, said the alleged mastermind made a P10,000 downpayment but failed to pay the remaining fee for the P50,000 contract to finish off Bautista.

A pale and visibly weak Bautista told Borromeo that he has an idea who was responsible for his abduction but stopped short of naming the alleged mastermind.

Police said the main suspect was the victim's nemesis in the firm.

Bautista, scion of the wealthy Arce clan, is a grandson of Don Mauro Arce, not his son as earlier reported by the police.

Bautista was kept inside a safehouse located an hour by car from the ricefield where he was dumped.

He said his hands were tied at his back during his entire captivity.

He said he was not fed.

Bautista revealed that his abductors decided to release him after they failed to reach the alleged mastermind over the cell phone.

He said he also overheard them talking about the pay-off in the safehouse after he

SCION/ A30

No truce—Fernando

By Leila B. Salaverria

FERNANDO

WHAT Christmas moratorium?

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said that sidewalk vendors are mistaken if they believe that a moratorium on sidewalk clearing operations would be implemented during the holidays.

"It's not true that we would stop (the sidewalk clearing operations," Fernando told the INQUIRER yesterday. "The president was only expediting the vendors' entry inside the marketplaces with the help of the mayors."

The MMDA chair was reacting to claims by militant groups that the president has agreed to a virtual halt of the clearing operations.

He added that the president did not tell him to cease his controversial campaign during a meeting in Malacañang on Friday attended by various militant groups and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Mike Defensor.

Fernando said the vendors were told to seek the help of local officials in their area so that they could transfer to a legitimate place.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said there was no order to MMDA officials for a let-up in the operations, and added they could not stop their clearing activities lest they lose their momentum.

"If they ask for a moratorium because of Christmas, then they would also use other events to ask for another moratorium," he said. "They could use Valentine's Day and the opening of classes, for instance, as reasons to ask for a halt to sidewalk clearing operations. There would be no letup in the requests."

But Don Pangan, Sanlakas information officer, said that "in essence," President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was ordering a stop to the sidewalk clearing operations. He said yesterday that the agreement reached in Malacañang was that there would be no dispersals while sidewalk vendors are having consultations with mayors.

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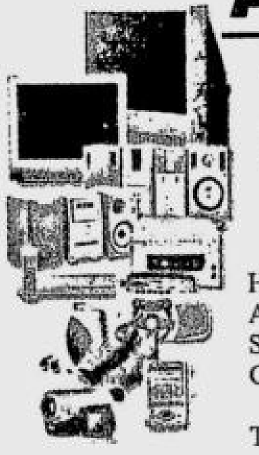

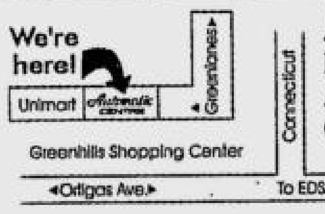

At the former Manila Bank Arcade facing Ortigas Avenue

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The all-new two-storey, fully airconditioned branch continues the tradition of giving you the best in home and office appliances and furniture. You can shop for all the top brands and most popular appliances at very affordable prices everyday! Plus, visit our appliance-and-furniture sales exhibit ongoing until December 31, 2002 at the Greenhills location.

At the same time, you can take advantage of the Buy Now, Pay Next Year promo. Simply make a purchase worth P12,000 and above at the "Installment Craze" exhibition in Greenhills and you will be billed two months after the purchase date! You can also avail of the promotion at any branch of Automatic Centre, Blims Fine Furniture or Sogo.

What's more, you can enjoy the lowest interest rates with your credit card for your appliance purchases. Plus, you can buy selected LG, Electrolux, Philips, Pioneer, Whirlpool and White-Westinghouse appliances at 0% interest at the Greenhills exhibit.

Enjoy more perks and shop for your dream appliances at the Greenhills exhibit and in our branch network for this special shop-and-swipe promo!

No Better Christmas Than Now At Automatic Centre

CHRISTMAS is just around the corner. It's now the time to think of the perfect gift ideas for your family, friends and loved ones. Now is the time to go to a store where you can buy them high-quality gifts at very low prices.

Because when it comes to the best gift suggestions, there's only one name you can turn to – Automatic Centre.

For 54 years now, Automatic Centre has offered its valuable clients the widest array of superior quality home and office appliances. At all Automatic Centre branches, you can find the top brands in appliances. What's more, these appliances are sold at guaranteed low prices or your money back.

This Christmas, Automatic Centre also offers an exciting multifaceted consumer promotion to make your shopping experience at Automatic Centre so memorable that you'll want to come back for more!

Plus, Automatic Centre gives you the widest choice of payment options to fit your budget. Whether paying in cash or installment, Automatic Centre has made it so much easier for you to own the appliances you desire.

Shopping for the best-priced Christmas gifts? Visit Automatic Centre, where you'll find the best selection of quality home and office appliances.

Millions Of Prizes To Be Won This Christmas

LOOKING for nice gifts to give this Yuletide Season? Visit Automatic Centre, Blims Fine Furniture and Sogo branches to see the latest collection of appliances and furniture, and get a chance to win in our three different raffle promos!

Win a home entertainment showcase in the Home Theater Holiday raffle draw. Every P1,000 worth of purchase from Automatic Centre, Blims Fine Furniture or Sogo from November 16, 2002 to January 19, 2003 entitles you to a raffle coupon that would give you a chance to participate in the January 24, 2003 Grand Draw where you could win one of three brand-new home theater systems from JVC, LG and Philips!

You can also be one of the seven winners in the Daily Giveaway Raffle! The same raffle coupon you earn for every P1,000 purchase at Automatic Centre, Blims Fine Furniture or Sogo from November 16 to December 31, 2002 will give you the chance to be a Daily Appliance Prize Winner. Every day of the week, one winner will be drawn from the day's entries. That's seven winners each week!

Your Christmas wish can come true when you visit our branches and give Santa your wish list in Win Santa's Free Gift – Nothing To Buy Promo! Just visit any Automatic Centre, Blims Fine Furniture or Sogo branch from November 15, 2002 to January 2, 2003 and get a raffle coupon on which you can write your desired appliance worth P10,000.00. One winner will be drawn every week!

Plus, get a chance to win luxury cars, appliance showcases, premium items and other freebies from the special consumer raffle promos of our suppliers and credit card partners!

What are you waiting for? Triple your chances of winning! Rush to Automatic Centre, Blims Fine Furniture and Sogo and have the merriest Christmas Holiday ever!

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GE	Cordless Phone 6702	P 1,698
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KOCOM	Digital Camera KDC205	P 4,198
KOLIN	CTV KCT-1470	P 4,980
SHARP	Karaoke HK-400R 1,500 watts	P 6,470
SHARP	Color TV 20VL75	P 7,695
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4 'extort' cops fall at Crame

By TJ Burgonio

AGENTS of the Regional Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit yesterday served arrest warrants on four members of the Firearms and Explosives Division (FED) charged with extorting money from a lottery winner inside Camp Crame.

But Senior Supt. Geary Barias, FED director, surrendered his men, Insp. Pedro Zalun, SPO2 Joseph Marayag, SPO1 Reyleo Tupaz Jr. and PO3 Bob Belver, to the arresting agents, police officials said.

The four, together with ex-Constable 2nd Class Rolando Tabacucu and ex-SPO4 Sixto Ringor, were charged with extorting at least P200,000 from Stella Cerame and her husband, Prudencio, after seizing firearms from them in Dagupan City last week.

Tabacucu and Ringor were arrested on the day of the extortion.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, director of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said that the suspects extorted from Ms Cerame after learning that she had won P28 million from a lottery draw in Hong Kong last year.

Investigation showed that the four FED operatives, together with Tabacucu and Ringor, conducted a search at the home of the Cerame couple in Barangay Panaga, Laoac town in Dagupan City on Nov. 20.

The team seized a 9mm Taurus pistol, a 9mm Glock pistol and a 9mm Daewoo pistol, and 106 rounds of live ammunition for a 9mm pistol from the couple.

Ms Cerame admitted that she only owned the 9mm Taurus and Glock pistols, which were licensed and registered.

Suddenly, SPO2 Marayag proposed that the couple pay them P1 million so that no charges of illegal possession of firearms would be filed against them. For fear that they would be charged and jailed, the couple gave in to the demand.

The Cerames, however, managed to produce only P200,000. But the policemen insisted that they pay the remaining balance on the same day.

This prompted the couple to decide to go with the suspects to a nearby bank to withdraw money.

But on their way to the bank, local police were tipped off about the extortion and ran after the suspects, nabbing Tabacucu and Ringor.

The FED operatives managed to elude arrest.

They were later traced inside Camp Crame.

Cerame also accused the policemen of carting away her three mobile phones and travel papers.

Dutch with child porn films jailed

By Philip C. Tubeza

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents nabbed a 38-year-old Dutch national after he was caught with videotapes containing child pornography.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said Johannes Marten Pitstra, billeted at Hotel Kanumayan on Taft Avenue, Manila, was nabbed on Nov. 24 after he had visited Boracay.

Wycoco said the NBI learned of Pitstra's activities after another suspect was nabbed in September in Manila for trading child pornography on the Internet.

Lawyer Angelica Somera, NBI-Violence Against Women and Children Division chief, said records found with the suspect showed that he dealt with "a certain Johan from Holland."

The NBI also learn that "Johan" planned to visit the Philippines on Nov. 18.

Somera said the NBI checked with Hotel Kanumayan and confirmed that "Johan" was Pitstra.

They also found out that Pitstra was going to Boracay on Nov. 23. The NBI alerted the Aviation Security Group at the Manila Domestic Airport.

When Pitstra checked in for his flight, ASG officers confiscated some VHS and Handy cam tapes from him.

But Pitstra was allowed to fly to Caticlan, Boracay. It was only later that authorities viewed the contents of the tape and discovered that it contained child pornography.

When Pitstra flew back to Manila on Nov. 24 and claimed his video tapes, investigators arrested him.

He was turned over to the Bureau of Immigration, which then referred Pitstra's case to the NBI for further investigation.

Somera said the suspect was charged with child abuse before the Pasay City Prosecutor's Office. He is presently detained at the NBI jail pending the result of the preliminary investigation.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	KAILANGAN KITA
Ali 2	BAHID
Ali 3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
Ali 4	HARRY POTTER 2
Ali 5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
Ali 6	TRANSPORTER
Ali 7	HIBLA
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	KASIPING
Farmers 2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
ARANETA COLISEUM	
DEC. 1	PBA GAMES
DEC. 4	ANAK LAUNCH
DEC 9 & 11	NCA DERBY
ELEPHANT WORLD	
NOV. 30	10 AM / 1:30 PM / 5 PM
DEC. 1	10 AM / 3 PM
DEC. 2	10 AM / 3 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO / BIRTHDAY GIRL
ODEON	DIE ANOTHER DAY
ODEON-2	BIGLANG LIKO / TALAHIB AT ROSAS
ROBEN	KASIPING
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	FREAK · BOURNE IDENTITY
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
QUEZON-1	KASIPING
REMAR	DIE ANOTHER DAY
REMAR-2	KASIPING
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HIBLA
B	GISING NA SI ADAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	FRENCH ANIMATION FESTIVAL
CINEMA-2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BAHID
CINEMA-2	KASIPING
CINEMA-3	KAILANGAN KITA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	BAHID
CINEMA-6	BIYAHERA
CINEMA-7	BRAZEN WOMAN
CINEMA-8	GISING NA SI ADAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-12	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-14	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-15	BAHID
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LINES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	DIE ANOTHER DAY	DIE ANOTHER DAY 10:30, 1:15, 4:00, 6:45, 9:30	DIE ANOTHER DAY 12:20, 3:10, 6:00, 8:50, 11:40	DIE ANOTHER DAY
DIE ANOTHER DAY	DIE ANOTHER DAY 12:20, 3:05, 5:50, 8:35, 11:20	SONGBIRD SINGS - REGINE VELASQUEZ NOV. 29-30 / DEC. 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 1:30, 4:50, 8:10, 11:30	DIE ANOTHER DAY
DIE ANOTHER DAY	THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST		DIE ANOTHER DAY 1:25, 4:15, 7:05, 9:55	DIE ANOTHER DAY
	MASTER OF DISGUISE		DIE ANOTHER DAY 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
	DIE ANOTHER DAY			
	DIE ANOTHER DAY			

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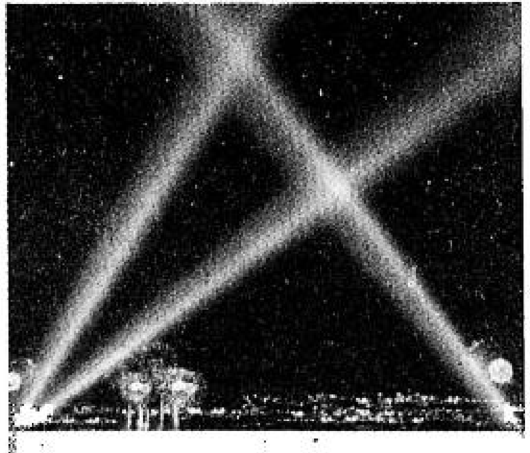

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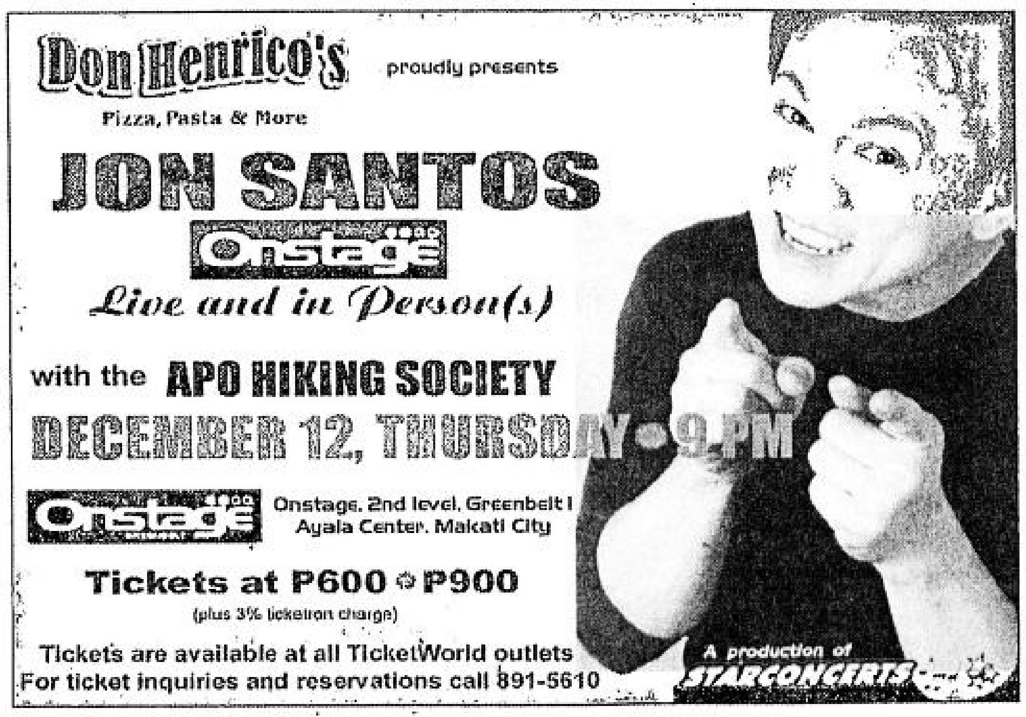

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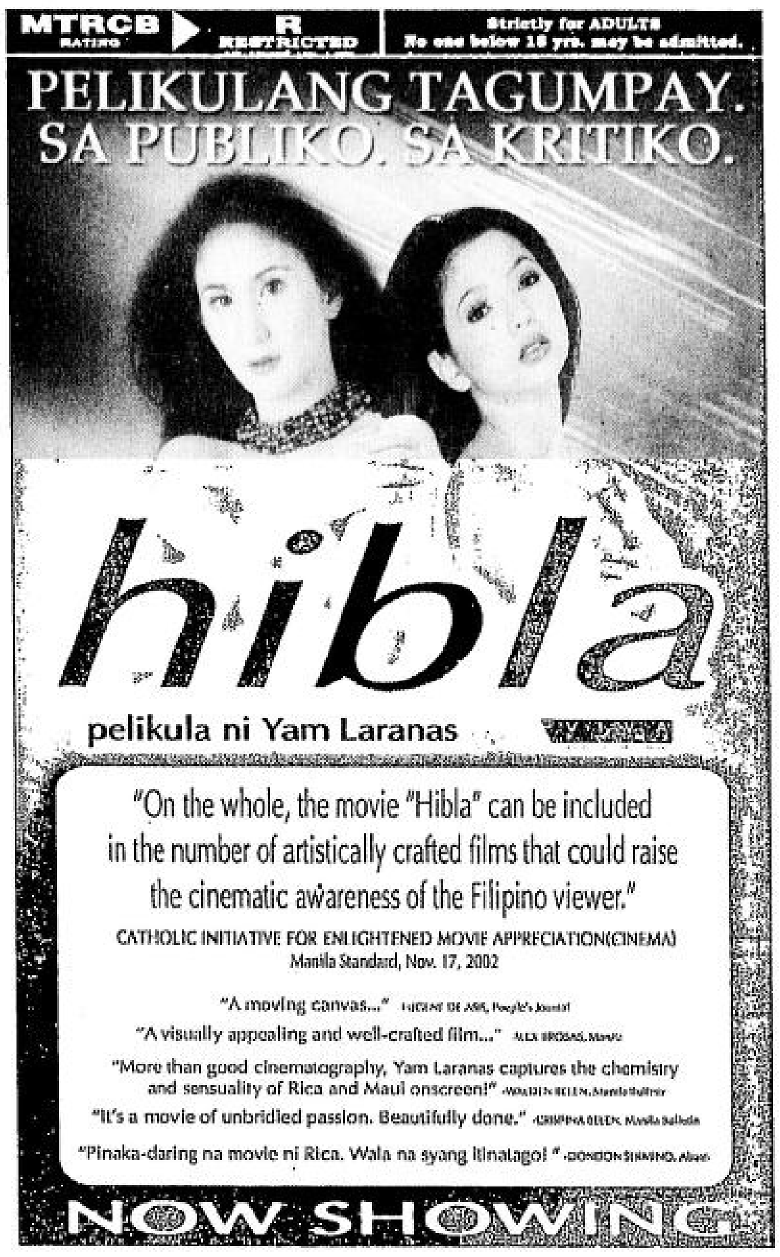

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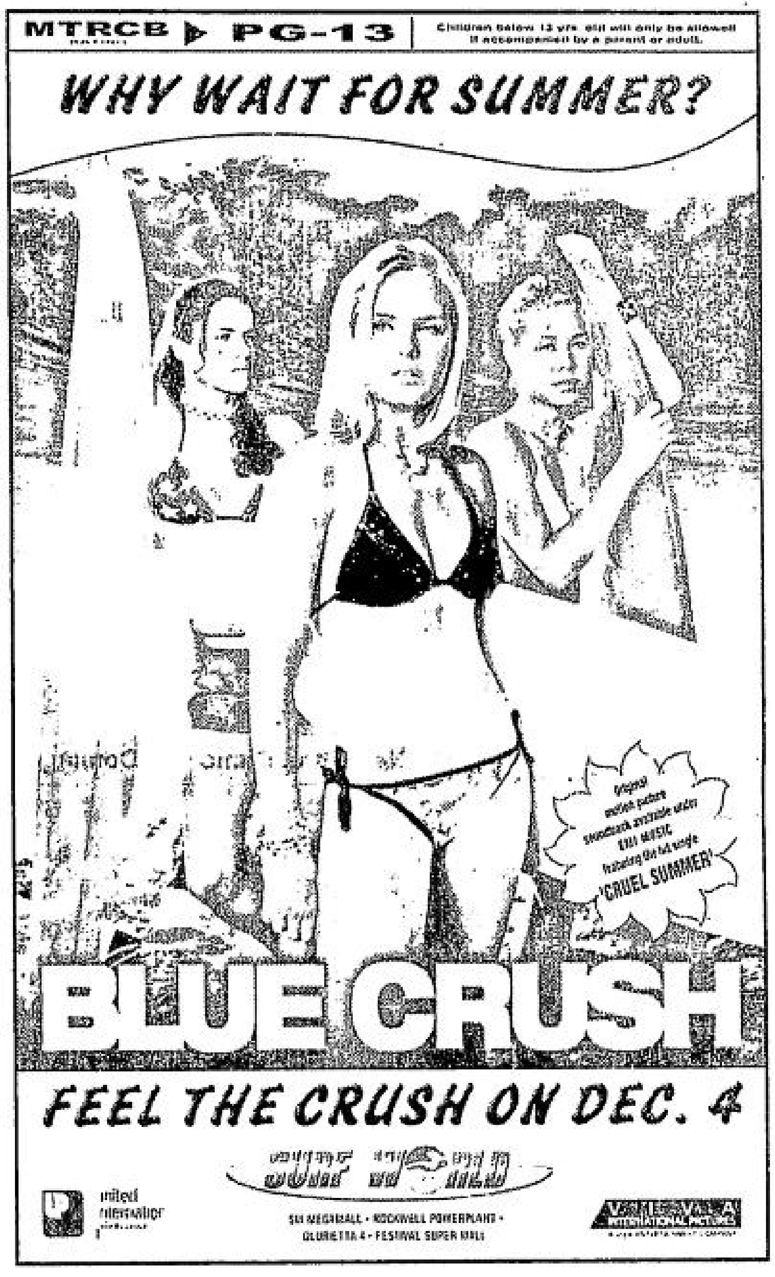

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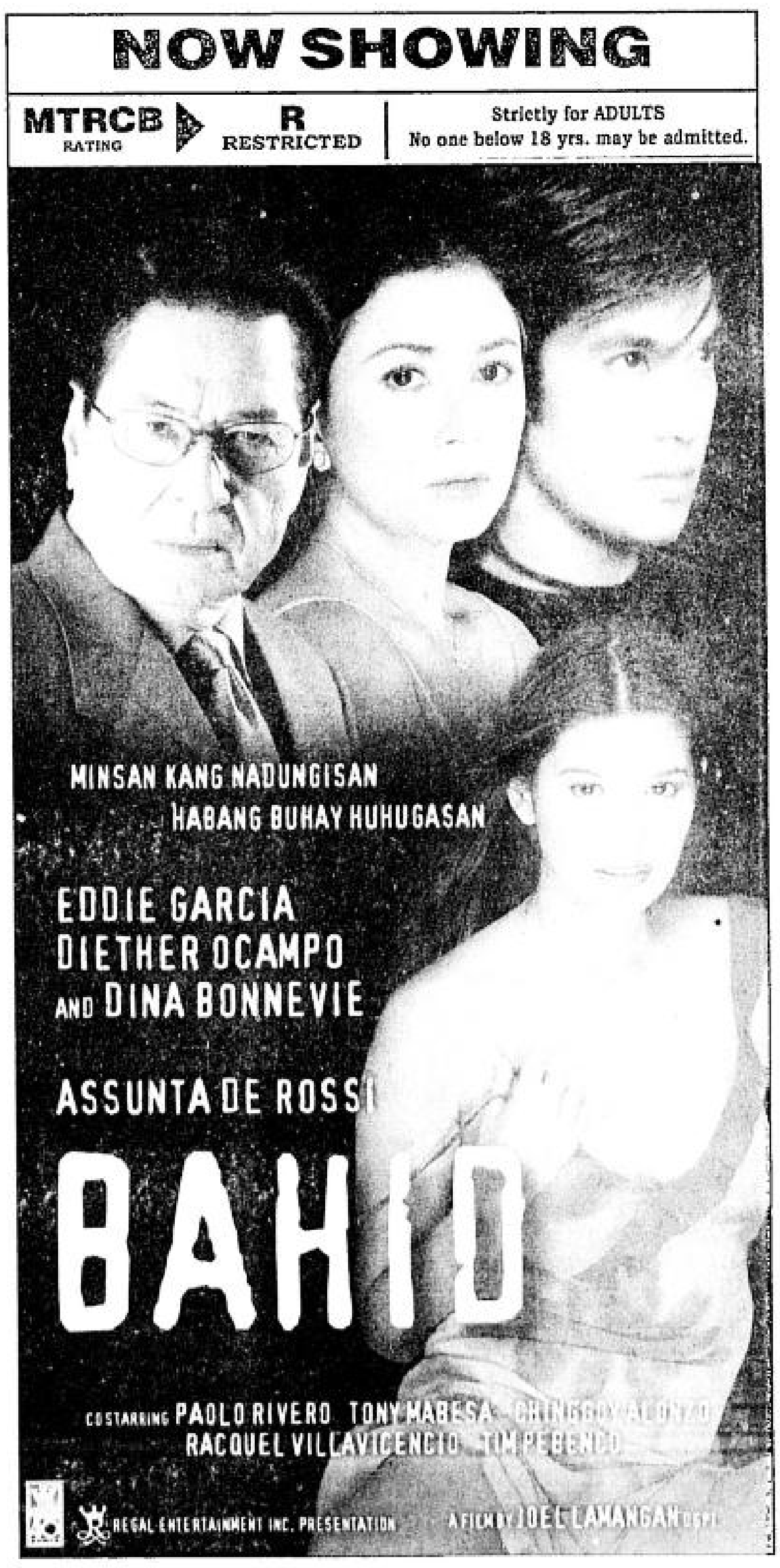

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Supreme Court dismisses Pasay judge for extortion

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE SUPREME Court has dismissed a Metropolitan Trial Court judge in Pasay City for allegedly trying to extort around P1 million from a 79-year-old female complainant.

In a 10-page en banc decision promulgated Wednesday, the high tribunal found Judge Francisco G. Supnet of MTC Branch 47 guilty of serious misconduct.

"It is this kind of gross and flaunting misconduct... that so quickly and surely corrodes the respect for law and the courts," the Supreme Court said. "Corruption (has made) him a deceased member which must be decisively severed from the body of the judiciary and cast aside."

Dr. Cora Virata had complained that Supnet had tried to extort P1 million from her in exchange for a favorable decision on her criminal case against one Editha Bailon.

Last Jan. 31, she alleged that the judge phoned her at home and told her that the case would be dismissed due to technicality on Feb. 13. He supposedly invited her to his office to discuss the case.

Four days later, Supnet made another call, this time asking that she give him the P1 million which her P2-million complaint against Bailon would supposedly earn as interest.

When she implored Supnet not to extort money from her, the judge told her he would settle for P250,000. "Take it or leave it," said the judge, according to court records.

The judge later ruled in favor of the doctor.

Virata's secretary Rose Sy backed her allegations, saying she had even personally handed amounts ranging between P2,000 to P10,000 to Supnet at the Pasay Hall of Justice beginning March 2000.

Sy added that she had heard through an extension line a conversation between her employer and Supnet on Feb. 4, 2002.

Employee Gregorio Sanchez of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. confirmed that the conversation took place, as shown by Supnet's office number that appeared in the caller identification device of Virata.

Supnet presented three witnesses to help him deny the allegation, but the high court still ruled in favor of the complainant.

When the decision was sent to Supnet Thursday, the judge found little consolation from court employees who cried.

"We were shocked, we don't believe he could do something like that," a female employee told the INQUIRER. "He's a good man."

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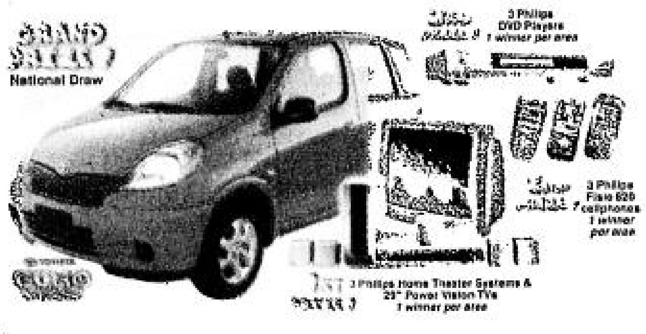
sa mga Weekly Winners ng Philips Fisio 620 Cellphones!
Pwede ka pa ring manalo sa mga Weekly Draws at sa Grand Draw sa December 18! (to be telecast on PBA at IBC Channel 13 on December 22)

WEEK NO.	GMA	LUZON	VIS-MIN
Week 1	Ma. Theresa Binalla Valenzuela City	Elizabeth Dumo Bauang, La Union	Cristina Vicario San Isidro, Northern Samar
Week 2	Rogelio Feniza Quezon City	Aurora Manalaysay Talavera, Nueva Ecija	Arlene Nillasca Davao City
Week 3	Romulo Sampayan Manila	Tony Soriano Mangatarem, Pangasinan	Reynaldo Ramboanga Davao City
Week 4	Candida de Jesus Valenzuela City	Aurelia Co Balungao, Pangasinan	Cherryl-Marie Casaig Negros Occidental
Week 5	Necitas L. Dumo Quezon City	Domingo Panaligan Plaridel, Bulacan	Rosemarie Banjao Dumaguete City
Week 6	Marie Jo Bonamel Yao Caloocan City	Gracita Rodil Angono, Rizal	Joel O. Ladao Cagayan De Oro City
Week 7	Jerry Ignacio Quezon City	Leonardo Rosario Dagupan City	Raymunda Dagumod Au Eastern Samar

Napakadaling sumali!
STEP 1: Manood lang ng PBA games at abangan ang "COOL PIPOL" of the Week promo spots.
STEP 2: Isulat sa isang papel ang inyong NAME, ADDRESS, TEL. NO., SIGNATURE, ang WEEK # na inyong sinasalihan at ang inyong sagot. Ilagay ito sa isang white envelope kalakip ang tatlong (3) empty wrappers ng MENTOS COOL CHEWS® pillowpacks.
STEP 3: Isulat sa envelope ang inyong return address at ipadala ang inyong entries sa:

Mentos Cool Chews® "COOL PIPOL" promo
Perfetti Van Melle Phils., Inc.
16th Floor, Octagon Centre, San Miguel Ave.
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Maaari ring ihulog ang inyong mga entries sa mga drop boxes sa mga major supermarkets.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3 Philips DVD Players 1 winner per area
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3 Philips Home Theater Systems & 21" Power Vision TVs 1 winner per area

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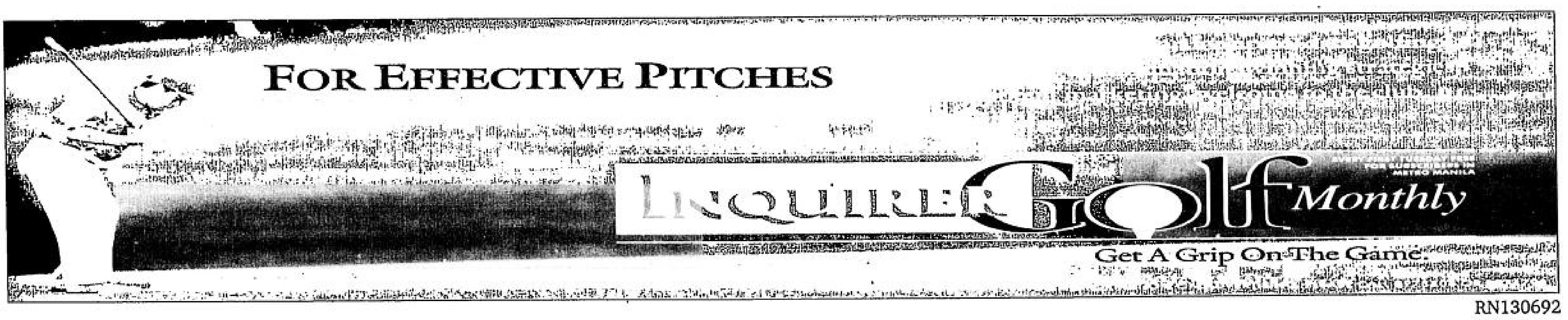
Promo runs November 29 - December 05, 2002
2nd Floor SM City Bicutan, Doña Salcedo Avenue cor. West Service Road, Bicutan, Parañaque City
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-0423 Series of 2002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They won't seek justice

By Christian V. Esguerra

WITH two of their clansmen dead, members of the Cebedo family have raised the white flag and announced they would not even seek justice for Perfecto Cebedo whose killing, they believe, was the handiwork of their staunch political rival, the Yap family of Misamis Occidental.

Fearing their entire clan might be wiped out, Prudencio Cebedo, 55, said on Thursday that his family had decided to quit politics following the assassination of his brother, Perfecto, in Muntinlupa last Sunday.

"Our involvement in politics collapsed with the death of Perfecto," Prudencio told the INQUIRER. "We have no intentions to pursue the case because we don't think it would go anywhere. The enemy is very powerful. We're tired of all this."

Prudencio is set to fly to the United States next Tuesday, immediately after the burial of his brother, Perfecto, vice mayor of Rizal town in Zamboanga del Norte.

Prudencio said he will be joining his wife and three children who have been staying in California since he survived an ambush in 1995.

In quitting politics, Prudencio said the Cebedos will also stop supporting and financing the candidacies of political allies in Rizal town.

Prudencio lost one other brother in the savage political war. Ten years ago, Victorio Cebedo was murdered two weeks after the elections, on orders of the Yap family during a rally in Barangay Birayan, Rizal. Victorio was up against Roy Yap in the mayoral race.

After the murder, Perfecto took over the candidacy, won the polls, and went on for three consecutive terms. He was vice mayor of Rizal at the time of his death.

Last year, a Manila regional trial court judge sentenced to life imprisonment Roy Yap, his older brother Rey, and two other men for the murder of Victorio. Rey is former mayor of Sapang Dalaga, Misamis Occidental.

"Two of my brothers have already been killed. I know I will be next. So it would be better to quit politics and leave for the United States for good," Prudencio said.

Prudencio himself nearly died in an ambush on San Marcelino Street in Manila on Feb. 28, 1995. He had just visited a regional trial court to check on Victorio's case when gunmen opened fire on his Mitsubishi L-300 van. Some of the bullets left deep, ugly scars on his right leg.

"After that incident, my wife berated me for refusing to leave politics, even though we knew we were up against a notorious political clan," Prudencio said. "I didn't listen to her then but I would heed her request now."

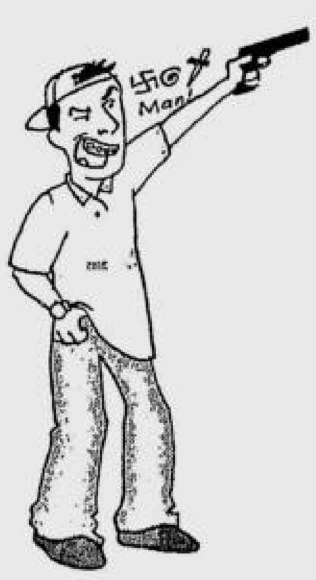
For two decades, the Yaps held sway over their hometown in Sapang Dalaga and in neighboring Baliangao. In 1992, the Yaps decided to expand their political territory and include nearby Rizal town.

HAIL THE GREAT PLEBE

As in past years, red will be the dominant color during rites in the area around this Manila monumen t of Andres Bonifacio, whose 139th birth anniversary is being commemorated today. Motorists have been advised to avoid the Monument Circle in Caloocan and instead take alternative routes. A program starts at 6 a.m. today with a civic parade and flag-raising ceremony at the Monumento Shrine of the national hero.

Where's coño kid?

By Leila B. Salaverria



THE KILLER is a "coño" kid.

This was the categorical statement given by a witness in the fatal shooting of a waiter at the Wasabi restaurant in Makati earlier this month.

In her statement to the police, the witness, a woman whose name is being withheld for protection, said she saw a rich-looking young man in a blue Pajero draw out a gun and shoot at the Wasabi restaurant along Makati Avenue several times around 5:00 a.m. on November 17, hitting 36-year-old waiter Arquiles Dait in the chest, which led to his death.

She said the suspect had another companion who was driving the vehicle.

The witness, who was standing outside Wasabi when the incident took place, also told police that the gunman was a young, fair-skinned, English-speaking man with a well-chiseled nose who was "angrily shouting" when he opened fire.

Makati police have prepared a cartographic sketch of the suspect based on her description.

She further said that she saw the suspect drop an envelope outside the Pajero's window before indiscriminately firing his gun.

Police have recovered the envelope, and inside was a piece of paper with a message written with a black marker that read: *"Ayaw mo sa sombrero, baka mas gusto mo ang bala!!"*

Police said the message supports their theory that the suspect was a disgruntled customer who was refused entry at Wasabi for not complying with a dress code because he refused to remove his cap.

Police said they would get the statements of several bouncers of Wasabi so that they could shed light on the incident. They are also investigating whether or not the drive-by shooting was related to a brawl that took place in the trendy bar the day before.

METROBRIEFS

Man stabbed dead shielding his child

CONSTRUCTION worker Ricardo Manahan was killed shielding his child from tricycle driver Roger Arega, who was out to settle an old grudge, in Quezon City on Wednesday. Manahan, 45, of Barangay Pasong Tamo, Quezon City, was sitting in front of his house and talking to neighbors while clutching his sleeping child when Arega, a tricycle driver, approached the victim with his weapon drawn at around 5:30 p.m., according to the Central Police District. Seeing the threat, Manahan turned his back on Arega to shield his son. Arega then stabbed Manahan several times in the back before he fled. Manahan's child survived the attack, police said. *Alcuin Papa*

Insurance man slain in Quezon City

INSURANCE man John Eric Cunanan was shot dead on Wednesday in Quezon City while he was having a drink with his friends, police said. Police said Cunanan, 23, a Philam Life insurance clerk and resident of Sampaloc, Manila, was shot several times in the abdomen. Police said Cunanan was drinking with his friends at around 3 a.m. Wednesday in Barangay Gulod, Novaliches, Quezon City when an unidentified man appeared and shot Cunanan repeatedly. The victim was rushed to the St. Luke's Hospital where he was pronounced dead, police said. *Alcuin Papa*

Hazing is PMA tradition

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

SENIOR cadets at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) will now think twice before beating up their underclass cadets as a way of disciplining them.

Two second-year cadets were convicted recently for hazing to death a plebe or first-year cadet.

Cadets Third Class John Louie Ong and Michael Perang were found guilty by the Baguio Regional Trial Court even after they invoked the premier military academy's tradition as their defense. They said that hazing was part of the PMA tradition.

* * *

The PMA administration said that hazing has never been a tradition at the academy.

Sure, hazing is not officially tolerated. However, PMA instructors look the other way when junior cadets are hazed as part of their initiation. Almost all PMA faculty members are graduates of the academy.

Hazing is part of a junior cadet's life at the PMA. It has been a practice since it was founded in 1905. So, if it's not part of the academy's tradition, what is it?

* * *

Junior cadets who are hospitalized after a severe beating by their upperclassmen are not expected to tell on their attackers under pain of being ostracized by fellow cadets.

My cousin, Boyex, was hospitalized for broken ribs after a severe beating from senior cadets. He had to go on a vacation because his long hospital stay kept him from his classes. Boyex eventually left the academy. But he never exposed his tormentors despite much prodding from my aunt.

It's only in hazing, though, where cadets are allowed not to tell on wrongdoings by fellow cadets. Other wrongdoings by cadets, like cheating, are exposed by fellow cadets.

* * *

PMA copied hazing from its counterpart, the United States Military Academy West Point.

But West Point has since discarded beating up of plebes as part of their initiation into the military system. Hazing is already taboo at West Point because it's a brutality.

But Pinoys will always be Pinoys. We overdo things and do better—or worse—than those we copy things from. So, too, do PMA cadets who have exceeded their West Point counterparts in brutality.

No wonder many of our soldiers in the field commit brutality against civilians. They're just taking revenge for the beatings they got from their superiors when they were trainees.

* * *

Ildefonso "Boy" Tronqued, my classmate from elementary school, looks more like a foreigner than a Filipino. With his hawkish nose, he looks like a Jew.

His Caucasian features nearly got him into trouble recently.

Tronqued was going down the escalator at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Malate, Manila, when two drunks, who were three steps in front of him on the same escalator, started cussing him for no reason.

* * *

"F* you! F*** you! Goddamn you!" said one of the drunks. The other drunk was giving him the "dirty finger."**

For a while, Tronqued was shocked. He didn't know what to do because he never did anything to provoke the two drunks.

But Tronqued is one tough cookie. He followed the two drunks and asked hotel security people who they were.

* * *

He was able to identify one of them: POl Noel C. Herrera, a policeman assigned with the Western Police District mobile patrol unit.

"Mon, what if I were a foreigner? That foreigner would have had a bad impression of the Philippines," Tronqued told me.

Baka nabakla lang sa iyo yung pulis, Boy! You'll be surprised, there are many cops who are faggots.

Just like Monopoly. Only the pieces are a wee bit bigger.
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Tuesdays
Special SECTIONS INQUIRER

Scion alive...

From page A25

was snatched on Tuesday.

Although an unidentified woman spoke in fluent Tagalog, the men allegedly have a thick Visayan accent.

Borromeo said they are still in the process of gathering concrete evidence to pin down the mastermind, after which they would file charges.

It was learned that Bautista's abductors decided to dump him unharmed after they were bothered by their conscience.

"Why should we kill him? Besides we are not killers," said Bautista quoting what one of the suspects said a few hours before he was freed.

Bautista reportedly overheard his captors arguing whether to kill him or not after they failed to get in touch with their financier.

Bautista said the men decided to free him because they were allegedly "paid just to abduct him."

The victim said he also overheard the men saying the mastermind had intended to personally kill him later.

No ransom was demanded by the group, Bautista told police.

Borromeo said this confirmed an earlier theory that Bautista's abduction was not a handiwork of a kidnap-for-ransom syndicate.

The investigation chief said that news reports about the abduction could have pressured the alleged mastermind to abandon his plan to kill Selecta scion.

Last Wednesday, police questioned dismissed company supervisor Felix Avila Jr., along with foreman Ramiro Gonzales, and company driver Jay dela Cruz regarding the case.The three are set to undergo a lie-detector test.

His abduction remains puzzle to church worker

By Madonna S. Virola,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

IN THREE days of captivity, Percival de Mesa said he had just had one nap and urinated only once. He said he could hardly eat the food his abductors gave him out of fear and anxiety.

De Mesa , 33, said he feared for his life throughout his captivity. He did not know who his abductors were, or what they hoped to accomplish by kidnapping him. But he said he gave in to the prodding of their parish priest, Fr. Nestor Adalia, who convinced him to reveal his ordeal on Thursday.

De Mesa, a service coordinator of Vicariate Forane 3 of the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan, claimed that unidentified men abducted him in Quezon City on Nov. 13 and put him through intense interrogation, mostly about his activities as a lay worker, until he was released on Nov. 16.

De Mesa said he had just finished praying at around 3:45 p.m. and was walking out of a church in Project 8 when a man approached him, placed his hands around the shoulders and said *"Huwag kang papalag* (don't resist).

The man then pointed to an L300 van where stood four men and a fifth behind the wheel, de Mesa told reporters in Gloria, Oriental Mindoro.

De Mesa said one of the men blindfolded him after he boarded the van. They then drove on for about 3 to 4 hours and stopped at a safehouse, which he believed to be in Laguna, where he was detained for three days.

"I really was very nervous about the harm they might do to me," de Mesa said in Filipino. "I was thinking of my family."

He said he never attempted to remove his blindfold after his abductors warned him not to.

Lay minister

Then the interrogation began.

De Mesa used to work as a teacher at the Immaculate Heart Academy in Pinamalayan before he joined the parish, where he is now a lay minister.

One of his interrogators asked him about his activities as a lay worker in Sigangit, Karmondo, and Tawas in Bongabong.

De Mesa told him he went to those places because of their program—the cultivation of Masipag rice (a type of organic rice) on trial farms in the areas.

He also told his interrogator about his dealings with Socorro farmers and recipients of Sacclaw, a micro-financing program in southern Mindoro.

The following day, a female co-worker called up de Mesa on his cell phone, which was still with him, reminding him of their meeting that day. When she asked him where he was, de Mesa tried to give her hints that all was not right. "I told her I was exhausted," de Mesa said. "Then the guard pointed a gun at me and took my cell phone." But the female lay worker felt something was wrong, and started to make phone calls to friends and their parish priest.

That afternoon, somebody removed his blindfold.

He was subjected to another round of questioning, all involving his work for the farmers. He was asked about his anti-mining campaign, which he admitted he is dong in coordination with other municipalities and institutions. Then his interrogator asked him if he knew anyone from Bayan Muna, to which he answered "no one."

"I really don't know anybody," he said.

Forehead

But his abductor did not believe him, and told de Mesa that all his activities were but a front for something.

Then the man closely examined de Mesa's forehead. Having been an officer of the Citizens Army Training, De Mesa understood that the examination was meant to establish his identity, because the forehead cannot be faked. On Nov. 16, after he heard the rooster crow, he heard one of his abductors say "tayo na (let's go)!" They all boarded the van and drove for about 45 minutes before he was dropped off.

Shortly after, he heard a woman exclaim, "ay, may tao (There's a man)!"

He asked the woman to take off his blindfold, and learned that he was in the backyard of the woman's house in Bauan, Batangas. Later, he woman generously lent him a pair of shoes because his abductors allegedly got his new and imported pair.

"The last thing they (abductors) told me was for me not to tell anyone (about my abduction)," he said.

That same morning, De Mesa rode a ship to Mindoro and reached shore at about 11 a.m. Before going home, he went Fr. Nestor and reported his experience.

Aside from the shoes, the only thing his abductors took was his cell phone. But this too was mysteriously returned to him a week after he was abducted. A friend handed him back his cell phone and told him that it was given to him by someone who, in turn, got it from somebody else. The abduction has ion has remained a big mystery.Meanwhile, the human rights group Karapatan reported that the military abducted eight persons and executed three, two of them members of the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya in Mindoro on Nov. 23-24.

Dahil tayo'y isang pamilya, isang puso ngayong Pasko, matinding aguinaldo ang alay namin sa inyo!

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Tide

Rejoice

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PANTENE

Cash-sayahan mula sa tatlong haring Pasko!

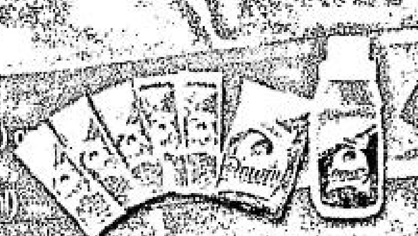
A total of P9,000,000 in cash prizes ang maaaring mapanalunan: P1,000,000 linggo-linggo at P4,000,000 sa Grand Draw!

NAPAKADALING SUMALI!

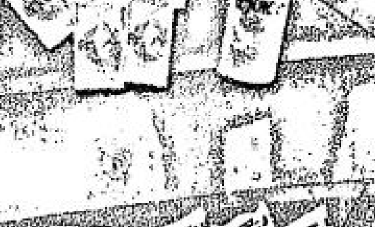
Isulat sa isang papel ang inyong pangalan, age, address, telephone number at pirmahan.

Ilagay ang entry sa isang envelope kalakip ang alinman sa mga sumusunod na proof-of-purchase:

1 empty wrapper of Tide Bar or
5 empty sachets (32 g, 48 g) or
1 empty pouch (200g, 500g,
1 kg, 1.6kg) Tide Powder

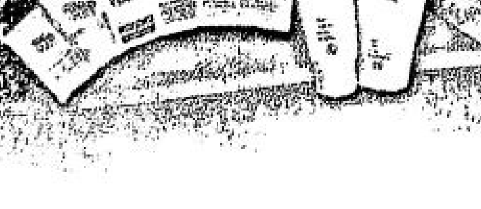


Downy (all variants)
5 empty sachets (22ml, 33ml) or
1 empty pouch (200ml) or
1 empty bottle (250 ml, 450ml)



Rejoice (all variants)
6 empty sachets (7.5ml) or
1 empty bottle (100ml, 200ml, 400ml)
Rejoice Shampoo

Safeguard (all variants)
3 empty sachets (25g) or
2 empty boxes (90g, 135g)



Pantene (all variants)
6 empty sachets (7.5ml) or
1 empty bottle (100ml,
200ml, 400ml)

Isulat sa labas ng envelope ang promo title, week number at ang inilakip na proof-of-purchase.

Ipadala ang inyong entry sa: PCN / Promopro Inc. Tempus Bldg. Matalino St. Diliman, Quezon City

O ihulog sa mga dropboxes na matatagpuan sa ABS-CBN stations, supermarkets at groceries nationwide.

Tumutok sa MTB tuwing Sabado. Apat ang bubunutin linggo-linggo! Sila'y ating tatawagan at papipiliin ng isa sa tatlong hari.

Guaranteed P100,000 ang mapapanalunan sa weekly draw. At kapag napili ang tamang hari, P250,000 ang maaaring iuwi!

Ang di nanalo sa weekly draws ay kasali pa rin sa Grand Draw.

Guaranteed P500,000 ang mapapanalunan sa Grand Draw. At kapag napili ang tamang hari, P1,000,000 ang maaaring iuwi!

So keep on sending your entries. The more entries you send, the more chances of winning!

Deadline for submission of entries is every Friday a week before the draw date.

WEEKLY DRAW DATE		DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION
Wk 1	December 11 (Wed)	December 6 (Fri)
Wk 2	December 18 (Wed)	December 13 (Fri)
Wk 3	December 24 (Tue)	December 20 (Fri)
Wk 4	December 31 (Tue)	December 27 (Fri)
Wk 5	January 8 (Wed)	January 3 (Fri)
Grand	January 22 (Wed)	January 17 (Fri)

[illegible] contest schedules:

WEEKLY DRAW DATE		Call-in Contest
Wk 1	December 11 (Wed)	December 14 (Sat)
Wk 2	December 18 (Wed)	December 21 (Sat)
Wk 3	December 24 (Tue)	December 28 (Sat)
Wk 4	December 31 (Tue)	January 4 (Sat)
Wk 5	January 8 (Wed)	January 11 (Sat)
Grand	January 22 (Wed)	January 25 (Sat)

Four valid entries shall be drawn each week under the supervision of DOH-BFAD [illegible] shall be determined of (1) player coming from [illegible] NCR, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Winners will be notified by registered mail and will also be announced on air within the week they have been determined.

Winners should present the following requirements to the authorized ABS-CBN representative/office: Registered notice, 2 valid ID.

Unclaimed prizes sixty (60) days after receipt of notice are forfeited in favor of ABS-CBN/Procter & Gamble with prior approval of DOH-BFAD.

Winners may only win once during the draw. Each win is only valid for that week. All non-winning weekly entries are eligible for the Grand Draw.

The Grand Draw will be held in the Magandang Tanghali Bayan live broadcast on January 25, 2003, Saturday.

Only current packaging of the participating brands is considered valid for this consumer promotion.

All draws shall be done in the presence of a DOH-BFAD representative.

Winners shall shoulder the prize tax of their winnings.

The decision of ABS-CBN with the concurrence of DOH-BFAD on any disputes that may arise during the promo period is considered final.

Relatives of P&G, ABS-CBN and PCN / Promopro Inc. up to the second degree of affinity and consanguinity are not allowed to join this consumer promotion.

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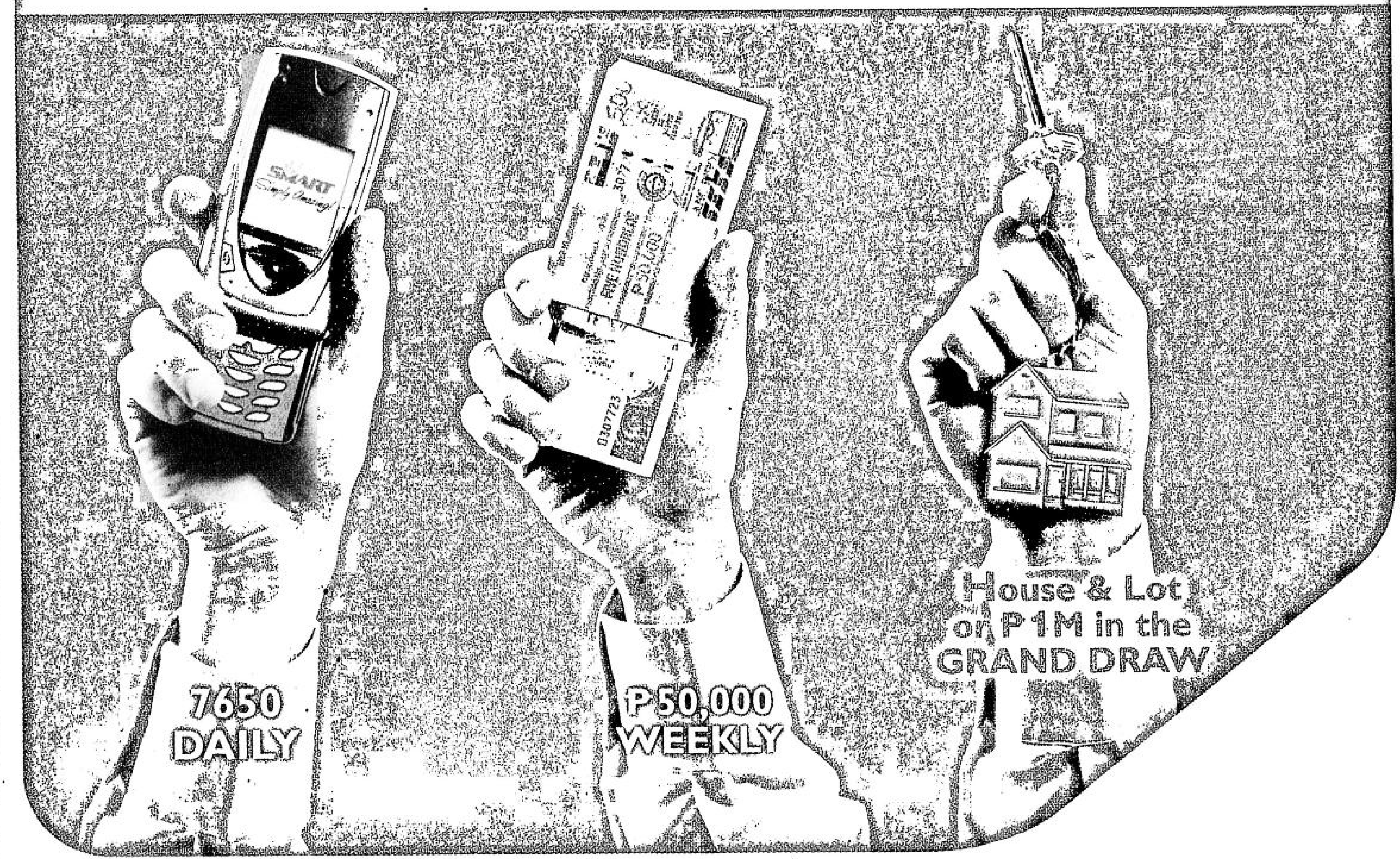

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BUSINESS

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo** ● Assistant Editor **Corrie S. Narisma**

Napocor plans to lay off 2,370 workers

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EMPLOYEES of National Power Corp. yesterday condemned a recently approved restructuring plan for the state firm that would leave about more than 2,000 persons jobless, and which they claimed was cooked up in "haste and total secrecy."

In a letter dated Nov. 27, officers of the Napocor Employees Consolidated Union (Necu) asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to nullify the plan that the Napocor board of directors approved in an "inhuman and sardonic act."

The supervisors-based Necu said two board resolutions adopted on Nov. 18 meant to leave 2,370 employees jobless by the end of January.

The restructuring provides for the reduction of Napocor's workforce from a total of 5,648—including those working at company-owned power plants—to 3,275.

The union argued that the Electric Power Industry Reform Act states that separation of employees shall happen only after the restructuring and privatization of Napocor assets.

"The Napocor board should come up with new resolutions which conform with existing laws and are humane in their provisions," Necu said.

The employees asked the President to intervene for the employees' sake.

In a separate appeal to the Chief Executive and members of Congress, "concerned Napocor employees" said that the restructuring plan aimed to accomplish nothing more than the termination of the employees.

They added: "The plan implemented a new table of organization that displaced incumbent officials whose functions have been usurped by underlings designated by the Napocor board and who cannot be held accountable for their actions for lack of appointments duly attested by the Civil Service Commission."

The accompanying guidelines laid out in detail the phased termination of and payment of separation benefits to all employees until March 31, which they said the law provides for only after the firm's assets have been disposed.

In a statement on Monday, Napocor acting president Roland Quilala called on all employees to remain committed to render quality service despite the uncertainties brought by restructuring.

"When the complete table of organization has been finalized and approved by the Napocor board, the vacancies will be properly disseminated to allow employees to participate in the selection of those who will fill up the new (table of organization)," Quilala said.

BSP forecasts higher inflation for November

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas expects the annual inflation rate for November to be at 3 to 3.1 percent, higher than the forecasts given by the economic planning agency for the month, a senior official said yesterday.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco told reporters the bank's estimate was "based on certain assumptions like El Niño," a weather phenomenon that causes drought in the region.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said on Thursday the inflation rate for November might slow to between 2.5 and 2.7 percent compared with 2.7 percent in October, mainly due to stable food prices.

The government earlier said recent estimates showed average annual inflation this year might hit 3.2 percent, lower than the original target of 4.5 to 5.5 percent.

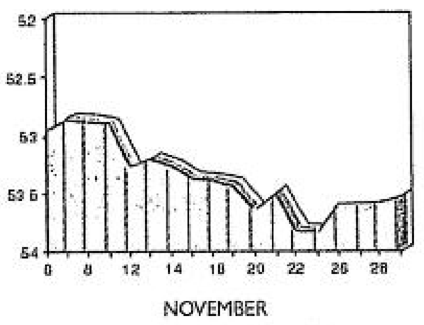
Canlas said during an economic briefing that the country's inflation rate, which measures increases in the prices of basic goods and services, would be tempered provided food prices remained stable "and there are no further shocks from energy prices."

In October, the inflation rate eased to 2.7 percent from 2.9 percent in September as stable food prices brought by the good weather had offset some upswing in the prices of basic utilities and services. The harvest season for rice in many regions also ensured a bountiful supply of the major staple.

Canlas said the government's macroeconomic policies have helped sustain the downtrend of both inflation and interest rates despite rising fuel prices. *Reuters*

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



NOVEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 53.53= $

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 29, 2002

¥ 122.44 = $

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 29, 2002

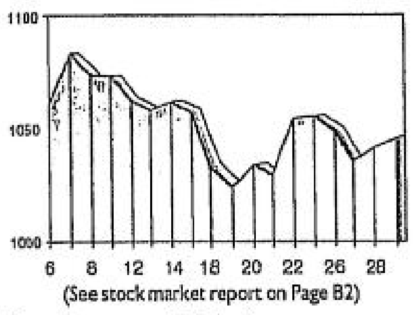
GOLD: $318.50-319.00

per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 29, 2002

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

NOVEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks end higher

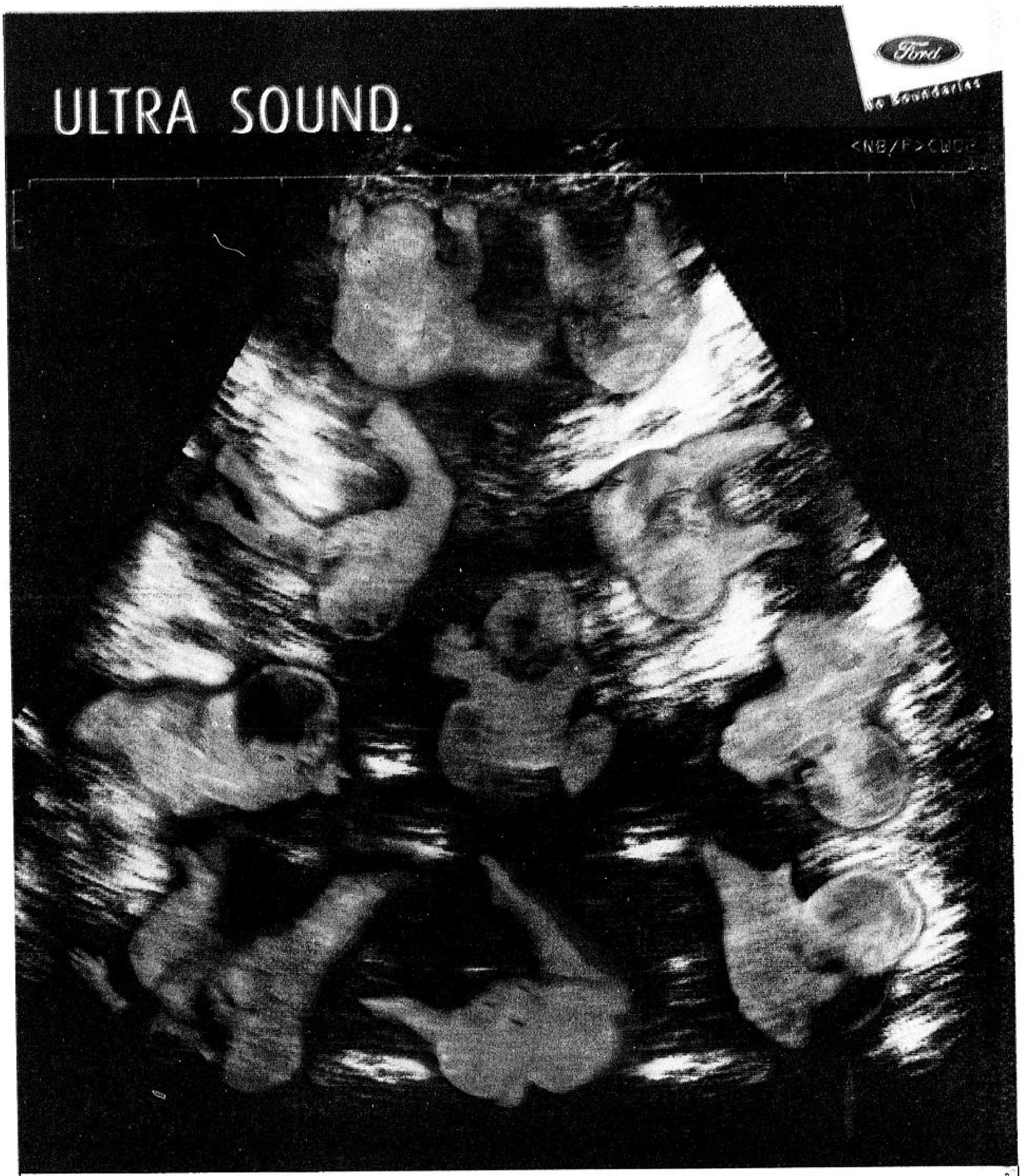
STOCKS closed a touch higher in light trade yesterday with local players lacking strong cues as Wall Street was closed on Thursday for the Thanksgiving holiday.

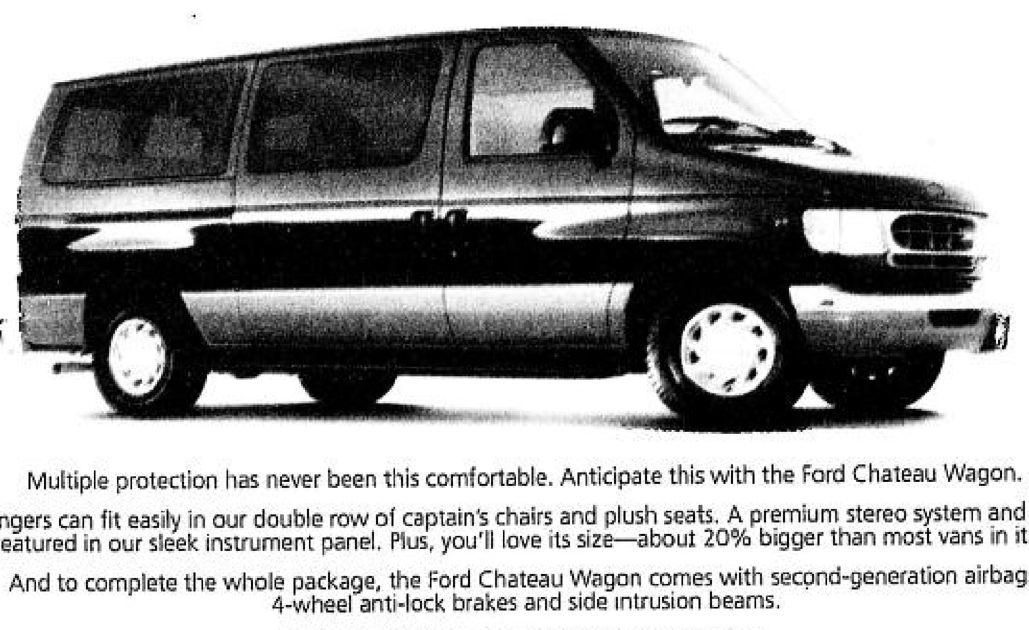
Investors were also sidelined by growing concerns about the country's security situation after Australia and Canada temporarily closed their embassies over possible terror threats.

"The market was directionless and security concerns are lingering," Westlink Global Equities chair Rommel Macapagal said.

"There are too many concerns—concerns on growth, now peace and order with two major embassies closing," said Astro del Castillo, an analyst at A&A Securities Inc.

STOCKS/ B3





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Dry another day

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

HOPEFULLY, the closure of those embassies had nothing to do with all the hoot about the million-dollar man, but you can never be sure.

Unverifiable reports are adamant that the people in those embassies were already falling down with laughter. The closure was their way of saying "stop it already."

You know how diplomats are. For instance, when they say you are ugly, they say it in a way that makes you feel like the star of "Kasiping."

And that's why, in diplomatic language, the embassies would prefer just to call their closure ... well, an "indefinite suspension of operations."

* * *

IN business, nevertheless, intelligence reports went around, saying that somebody perhaps jumped the gun on Philippine authorities.

It could have been a case of panic attack. Somebody could have acted on unverified information, whatever kind of information it was.

Nobody in the military knows the source of the information. It was not yet validated by the military and the police intelligence.

In the language of James Bond, "unverified" is just another way of saying "rumor."

* * *

YET the closure of the embassies will hurt this cute administration. Embassies do not, ahh, indefinitely suspend operations just like that. They do not invent their own holiday.

They are closed, and they are closed indefinitely. This means, for the sake of MJ, that nobody knows when they will open again.

How will all those Filipinos now move to those countries, as illegal aliens searching for greener minds ... I mean, pasture?

Moreover, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon must be nursing a terrible headache by now. All his hard work is going up in smokescreen. Or something like that.

* * *

ANYWAY, for the first time, and I assure you it is the last, I can agree with Rep. Imee Marcos, who said that the closure is embarrassing for the country.

It is a clear message to the rest of the world. We are under attack by terrorists. Embassies are closing down. And all 80 million of us cannot do anything.

They will think, for instance, that terrorist attacks happen in our country as often and as randomly as the "midnight madness."

This kind of terror only attacks the foreign numbered bank accounts of people like the self-described "philanthropist" MJ. This is starting to be a lot of fun.

* * *

HOPEFULLY, too, the closure of those embassies had nothing to do with the love letter of Jose Isidro "the Whiz" Camacho to the Meralco management.

The Whiz suggested, which means it was not compulsory, that since Meralco has money problems, the government can simply take over Meralco.

When the whatever hits the fan started to scatter all over the place, the Whiz quickly clarified that he only wanted the government to take over management.

But I wonder, when you take control of a company, what else do you take over—the bathrooms and dryers? So Meralco told the Whiz just to dry another day.

* * *

BUT the timing of the issues on the embassies, the million-dollar man, and Meralco can never be better.

Official figures showed that the economy is slowing down. In business, they fear that with those issues, things can get worse. Even the feng shui cannot do anything.

For instance, this cute administration still has to come across the mystery blower behind the ballooning budget deficit.

To think, the Whiz even hopes to pinch that balloon with some foolproof plan for privatization of government assets like its—suprise!—Meralco shares.

* * *

AS guys like MJ, who had plans for the Lopez control of Meralco, already knew since 1998, the government owns 25 percent of Meralco.

With the money problems of Meralco, courtesy of the defunct ERB, held up (as in "support" and not "stick up") by the Supreme Court, how do you sell those shares?

For that matter, how do you sell things like Napocor. Its losses this year are estimated to reach more than P70 billion.

Napocor is the biggest vacuum cleaner of Meralco funds. The government wants to sell the losing Napocor, and then take over the milking cow Meralco. Very good!

* * *

RECENTLY, or about 50 years ago, the Philippines had a higher income per person than other countries in our region, much better off than Taiwan, Thailand, Korea and China.

Today, among the bigger economies in the region, we only beat Indonesia. We are the second poorest. We managed to drop that low in only 50 years.

What will happen in the next 50 years, when our population will have reached more than 200 million people, unless terrorists succeed a lot of times?

But as it is, being poor, we don't have enough money to build the infrastructure that can speed up our development. We are stuck worse than Nani with MJ.

* * *

JUST a few days ago, before those embassies could act hastily, the foreign business chambers here gave a simple proposal to this cute administration.

They said why can't the government just allow foreigners to own a bigger part of infrastructure projects.

But why not? If we agree that we need the projects, anyway, and we have no way of financing them all at the same time, why not?

We have to look at it this way—they cannot take the projects home. Whatever infrastructure they build here, it stays here, and we use it.

Let's just look out for overpricing! Right, Evelyn?

Victorias rehab seen ready next month

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE REHABILITATION of Victorias Milling Co. will probably be finally settled before the end of this year.

This was disclosed by SEC Chair Lilia Bautista in a briefing with reporters.

On Dec. 16, VMC will hold a special stockholders' meeting to elect new board directors following the issuance of P2.5 billion new shares representing the conversion into equity of the sugar mill's loans from commercial banks.

Under the rehabilitation plan approved by the SEC earlier but which was opposed by VMC management led by Manuel Mañalac, the loans would be converted into equity and allow the creditors to own 69.5 percent of the company.

The 11-person board of VMC is expected to be taken up by six representatives of secured creditors, one from the group of unsecured creditors and a strategic investor and three from existing shareholders.

Also under the rehabilitation plan, the creditors would provide P300 million to finance the sugar mill's operations.

The creditors have long wanted to take control of the board of VMC but this had been blocked by some existing shareholders.

More than two years ago, the SEC had approved a rehabilitation plan for VMC but this was questioned by VMC management.

Mañalac did not want their ownership of VMC to be diluted and so instead submitted alternative rehabilitation plans that were rejected by the SEC and the creditors.

At present, VMC is on the path to recovery with reported gross earnings of P696 million on the back of a good sugar harvest.

Share-swap deal raises Lim stake in Solid group

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE LIM family will be able to increase its stake in electronics manufacturer Solid Group Inc. to 79 percent from the current 68.5 percent after the latter's share-swap deal to acquire the Destiny Cable group.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, SGI said that following the share-swap deal, the company's issued shares would increase to 3.06 billion shares from the existing 1.03 billion.

As the stake held by the Lim family and SGI officers will increase, shares held by the public will be diluted to 14 percent from 21.22 percent.

This developed as the shareholders of SGI recently approved the acquisition of shares and interests in Destiny Cable Inc. (DCI) and Destiny Inc. (DI) which are likewise owned by the family of Joseph and Elena Lim.

The plan has been shelved in the past due to delays in the government's approval of the deal. When the transaction was revived, the terms for the acquisition were likewise revised.

Earlier, the plan was for SGI to issue 673.845 million shares. Under the new terms, SGI will issue 1.02 billion shares.

With the planned acquisition, the Destiny Group will be restructured so that the broadband cable infrastructure assets will be owned by DI and the franchise to operate cable facilities and the assets directly necessary for the franchise will be retained by DCI. DI will become a wholly owned subsidiary of SGI, which will henceforth lease its equipment to DCI.

SGI, which went public in 1948, is engaged in the manufacture, distribution and export of consumer electronics.

PLDT mobile unit obtains $100-loan

SMART Communications Inc., the money-spinning cellular unit of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), said yesterday it had obtained a $100-million loan to finance its network expansion.

In a statement, Smart said the lead arrangers of the five-year loan facility were Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi Ltd., Citibank N.A., and ING Bank N.V.

"The purpose of the facility will be to finance equipment and services related to Phase 6 expansion of Smart's global system for mobile communications network, including transmission facilities, information technology systems, and other capital expenditures," said Smart, which is not listed on the stock exchange.

PLDT, the Philippines' largest telecommunications provider, earlier this month reported that nine-month earnings were up 75 percent on a year earlier at P1.4 billion.

Earnings were driven by a 51-percent rise in nine-month revenues from Smart Communications. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, November 29, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	18.25	17.75	18.25	174,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	39	39	38.5	39	353,000
China Banking Corp.	615	615	615	615	490
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	19	19	19	19	9,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26	25.5	25.5	112,500
First E-Bank Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	32	31	31	224,000
Prudential Bank	450	450	400	400	40,670
Philippine National Bank	24	25	24	25	36,900
Phil. Savings Bank	24	27	24	27	1,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	9.8	9.9	9.7	9.9	14,000
Security Bank Corp.	11	11	10.75	10.75	14,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	7,700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	60,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1310	1310	1310	1310	200
Sun Life Financial Serv.	950	950	930	940	1,350
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	15.25	15.25	15	15.25	13,200
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.42	1,820,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	427.5	437.5	427.5	435	26,390
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.025	2,700,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.014	0.016	0.013	0.016	800,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	282.5	290	277.5	290	219,730
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.01	0.012	432,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	10.5	10.5	9.4	9.4	124,000
Manila Electric Co. B	10.75	10.75	10	10.25	2,264,200
Petron Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.56	1.6	328,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	214,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	20,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.28	160,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATE D PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,000,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	64,100
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34	34	34	34	246,200
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	76,600
San Miguel Corp. B	64.5	64.5	64	64.5	827,500
Universal Robina Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.1	3.1	84,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.7	4.75	4.7	4.75	1,619,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.32	2.32	96,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	10,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.36	2.36	2.36	2.36	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.125	0.14	0.125	0.14	470,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	200,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	600,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.1	1.18	1.1	1.18	210,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	10	10.25	9.9	10.25	129,500
Ionics Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.9	570,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.36	1.3	1.36	335,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.58	0.59	0.57	0.59	3,980,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.185	0.185	0.155	0.155	18,480,000
Music Corp.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	200,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	150,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.032	0.045	0.032	0.045	900,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	3,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	300,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	60,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	2,200,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10.75	11	10.75	11	13,400
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	3,100,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	15	15.5	15	15.5	32,100
Jollibee Warrants	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.75	17,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrant	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	26,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	5.2	5.2	4.55	5.2	16,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.95	4.95	2,222,000
Cityland Development Corp.	2	2	2	2	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	3,880,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.89	1,410,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.96	1.98	1.94	1.98	940,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.2	5.2	5	5.1	2,220,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.165	0.17	0.165	0.17	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	420,000
Omico Corp.	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	36,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	1,000,000
Interport Res.	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	18,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0024	0.0022	0.0022	13,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	700,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000

CURRENCIES

Nov. 29, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.009285	1.000000	53.589000
Japan	Yen	0.008256	0.008180	0.438400
United Kingdom	Pound	1.562071	1.547700	82.939700
Hongkong	Dollar	0.129421	0.128230	6.871700
Switzerland	Franc	0.677828	0.671592	35.989900
Canada	Dollar	0.641957	0.636051	34.085300
Singapore	Dollar	0.571801	0.566540	30.360300
Australia	Dollar	0.560465	0.555309	29.758500
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.677220	2.652590	142.149600
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.269136	0.266660	14.290000
Brunei	Dollar	0.570960	0.565707	30.315700
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000112	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.023271	0.023057	1.235600
UAE	Dirham	0.274792	0.272264	14.590400
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.990800	53.096000
Argentina	Peso	0.290024	0.287356	15.399100
Brazil	REAL	0.281138	0.278552	14.927300
Denmark	Kroner	0.134645	0.133406	7.149100
India	Rupee	0.020953	0.020760	1.112500
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.265609	0.263165	14.102700
Mexico	New Peso	0.099634	0.098717	5.290100
New Zealand	Dollar	0.496476	0.491908	26.360900
Norway	Kroner	0.137329	0.136066	7.291600
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South Africa	Rand	0.108906	0.107904	5.782500
Korea	Won	0.000847	0.000839	0.045000
Sweden	Kroner	0.110177	0.109163	5.849900
Syria	Pound	0.019597	0.019417	1.040500
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.029111	0.028843	1.545700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000767	0.000760	0.040700

DISCLOSURES

CENTRO Escolar University's new stock transfer agent is the Professional Stock Transfer Inc.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings Inc. clarified that it is not a party to the negotiations between workers of SM branches and SM Mart Inc.

* * *

PHILWEB Corp. announced it signed a memorandum of agreement with the **Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.** for it to provide Pagcor with technical consultancy and services related to the Internet Sports Betting.

* * *

BAGUIO Gold Holdings Corp. announced the resignation of Regina Ymana as chief finance officer of the company.

* * *

SOLID Group Inc.'s capital structure after its acquisition of shares in Destiny Cable Inc. and/or Destiny Inc. shall be as follows: Lim Family and officers, from 68.47 percent ownership to 79.05-percent; public, from 21.22 percent to 14.1 percent and treasury shares, from 10.31 percent to 6.85 percent. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

National Power Corporation
GENERATION COMPANY1
GENCO-1

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
UNDER E.O. 40
AD NO. GENCO 1 2002-05

Bidding Date: December 19, 2002 10:00 AM
Pre-bid Conference: December 11, 2002 10:00 AM

The following manufacturers/suppliers/distributors, whether 100% local or at most 40% foreign-owned are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids to be opened publicly at 4th Floor Conference Room, National Power Corporation GENCO 1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila.

a. Duly licensed Individuals/Sole Proprietorship;
b Partnership or Corporations;
c. Manufacturers/Suppliers/Distributors forming into a joint venture;
d. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).

SOURCE OF FUNDING: INTERNAL CASH GENERATION
APPROVED BUDGET FOR CONTRACT TO BE BID:

Inquiry No. 0211-022 Supply of equipment, tools, labor and supervision for the installation of Bottom Ash Slurry Pump Discharge By-Pass Line 1 job P10,000.00

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained on the Procurement Section, Administration Division, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00 per Inquiry No. starting **December 2, 2002**. No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulations used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of "Executive Order 40."

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to at least 1% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Certified Check, Bank Draft Irrevocable Letter of Credit, or 1.5% of the approved budget in the form of Bank Guarantee, or 2.5% of the approved budget in the form of Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission

The corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality contained therein and accept the bids considered most advantageous to the corporation.

(Sgd.) LORNA T. DY
Manager
Professional Services Department

(PDI – Nov. 30, 2002)

USAID

DISPOSAL SALE

USAID/Manila will conduct a Sealed Bid Sale of used residential furniture/equipment, computer equipment and one (1) unit of 25KVA Generator, on an **"AS IS - WHERE IS"** basis.

All items can be inspected on December 2-4, 2002 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at USAID Warehouse, 2345 Aurora Boulevard, (formerly Tramo Street), Pasay City. Bid forms are available at the site. Submission of bids and cash deposits (20% of the total bid) can be done at the site during the sale. Full payment and bid deposit refunds will be on December 5, 2002 at 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the USAID/Cashier, 8th Floor, PNB Financial Center, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

For further information, please call Mr. Romy S. Arquisola or Mr. Alfredo Q. Daluz at Tel. Nos. 831-2271, 514-4229, 514-4234 and 514-4236.

(PDI -- Nov. 30 & Dec. 1, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY & TO BID

The Philippine Heart Center (PHC) is inviting bidders for one (1) year contract for the following services:

DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget	Bidding Fee
1. Janitorial Services	P13,466,588.00	P13,466.58
2. Security Services	11,697,909.00	11,697.90
3. Building Maintenance	8,955,221.90	6,977.60
4. Aircon Maintenance	2,817,461.00	3,408.70
5. Pest Control Services	190,575.00	952.87
6. Laundry Services		1,000.00

Source of Funding: PHC FUNDS

The lists of registration requirements will be issued at Bids & Awards Secretariat (BAC), Purchasing Div., PHC, Basement, MAB, East Ave., Q.C. Only eligible bidders shall be required to pay the non-refundable fee. The deadline for the submission of requirements is on **December 20, 2002** not later than 5:00 PM. For any inquiry, please call Purchasing Div. at 922-05-74.

The PHC reserves the right to reject any or all bids offering any reason to waive any formality or technicality, and to award any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to PHC. The PHC neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the PHC guarantee an award will be made.

(Sgd.) RAUL D. JARA, M.D.
Chairman, BAC

(PDI--Nov. 29, 30 & Dec. 6 & 7, 2002)

Dry another day

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

HOPEFULLY, the closure of those embassies had nothing to do with all the hoot about the million-dollar man, but you can never be sure.

Unverifiable reports are adamant that the people in those embassies were already falling down with laughter. The closure was their way of saying "stop it already."

You know how diplomats are. For instance, when they say you are ugly, they say it in a way that makes you feel like the star of "Kasiping."

And that's why, in diplomatic language, the embassies would prefer just to call their closure ... well, an "indefinite suspension of operations."

* * *

IN business, nevertheless, intelligence reports went around, saying that somebody perhaps jumped the gun on Philippine authorities.

It could have been a case of panic attack. Somebody could have acted on unverified information, whatever kind of information it was.

Nobody in the military knows the source of the information. It was not yet validated by the military and the police intelligence.

In the language of James Bond, "unverified" is just another way of saying "rumor."

* * *

YET the closure of the embassies will hurt this cute administration. Embassies do not, ahh, indefinitely suspend operations just like that. They do not invent their own holiday.

They are closed, and they are closed indefinitely. This means, for the sake of MJ, that nobody knows when they will open again.

How will all those Filipinos now move to those countries, as illegal aliens searching for greener minds ... I mean, pasture?

Moreover, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon must be nursing a terrible headache by now. All his hard work is going up in smokescreen. Or something like that.

* * *

ANYWAY, for the first time, and I assure you it is the last, I can agree with Rep. Imee Marcos, who said that the closure is embarrassing for the country.

It is a clear message to the rest of the world. We are under attack by terrorists. Embassies are closing down. And all 80 million of us cannot do anything.

They will think, for instance, that terrorist attacks happen in our country as often and as randomly as the "midnight madness."

This kind of terror only attacks the foreign numbered bank accounts of people like the self-described "philanthropist" MJ. This is starting to be a lot of fun.

* * *

HOPEFULLY, too, the closure of those embassies had nothing to do with the love letter of Jose Isidro "the Whiz" Camacho to the Meralco management.

The Whiz suggested, which means it was not compulsory, that since Meralco has money problems, the government can simply take over Meralco.

When the whatever hits the fan started to scatter all over the place, the Whiz quickly clarified that he only wanted the government to take over management.

But I wonder, when you take control of a company, what else do you take over—the bathrooms and dryers? So Meralco told the Whiz just to dry another day.

* * *

BUT the timing of the issues on the embassies, the million-dollar man, and Meralco can never be better.

Official figures showed that the economy is slowing down. In business, they fear that with those issues, things can get worse. Even the feng shui cannot do anything.

For instance, this cute administration still has to come across the mystery blower behind the ballooning budget deficit.

To think, the Whiz even hopes to pinch that balloon with some foolproof plan for privatization of government assets like its—suprise!—Meralco shares.

* * *

AS guys like MJ, who had plans for the Lopez control of Meralco, already knew since 1998, the government owns 25 percent of Meralco.

With the money problems of Meralco, courtesy of the defunct ERB, held up (as in "support" and not "stick up") by the Supreme Court, how do you sell those shares?

For that matter, how do you sell things like Napocor. Its losses this year are estimated to reach more than P70 billion.

Napocor is the biggest vacuum cleaner of Meralco funds. The government wants to sell the losing Napocor, and then take over the milking cow Meralco. Very good!

* * *

RECENTLY, or about 50 years ago, the Philippines had a higher income per person than other countries in our region, much better off than Taiwan, Thailand, Korea and China.

Today, among the bigger economies in the region, we only beat Indonesia. We are the second poorest. We managed to drop that low in only 50 years.

What will happen in the next 50 years, when our population will have reached more than 200 million people, unless terrorists succeed a lot of times?

But as it is, being poor, we don't have enough money to build the infrastructure that can speed up our development. We are stuck worse than Nani with MJ.

* * *

JUST a few days ago, before those embassies could act hastily, the foreign business chambers here gave a simple proposal to this cute administration.

They said why can't the government just allow foreigners to own a bigger part of infrastructure projects.

But why not? If we agree that we need the projects, anyway, and we have no way of financing them all at the same time, why not?

We have to look at it this way—they cannot take the projects home. Whatever infrastructure they build here, it stays here, and we use it.

Let's just look out for overpricing! Right, Evelyn?

Victorias rehab seen ready next month

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE REHABILITATION of Victorias Milling Co. will probably be finally settled before the end of this year.

This was disclosed by SEC Chair Lilia Bautista in a briefing with reporters.

On Dec. 16, VMC will hold a special stockholders' meeting to elect new board directors following the issuance of P2.5 billion new shares representing the conversion into equity of the sugar mill's loans from commercial banks.

Under the rehabilitation plan approved by the SEC earlier but which was opposed by VMC management led by Manuel Mañalac, the loans would be converted into equity and allow the creditors to own 69.5 percent of the company.

The 11-person board of VMC is expected to be taken up by six representatives of secured creditors, one from the group of unsecured creditors and a strategic investor and three from existing shareholders.

Also under the rehabilitation plan, the creditors would provide P300 million to finance the sugar mill's operations.

The creditors have long wanted to take control of the board of VMC but this had been blocked by some existing shareholders.

More than two years ago, the SEC had approved a rehabilitation plan for VMC but this was questioned by VMC management.

Mañalac did not want their ownership of VMC to be diluted and so instead submitted alternative rehabilitation plans that were rejected by the SEC and the creditors.

At present, VMC is on the path to recovery with reported gross earnings of P696 million on the back of a good sugar harvest.

Share-swap deal raises Lim stake in Solid group

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE LIM family will be able to increase its stake in electronics manufacturer Solid Group Inc. to 79 percent from the current 68.5 percent after the latter's share-swap deal to acquire the Destiny Cable group.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, SGI said that following the share-swap deal, the company's issued shares would increase to 3.06 billion shares from the existing 1.03 billion.

As the stake held by the Lim family and SGI officers will increase, shares held by the public will be diluted to 14 percent from 21.22 percent.

This developed as the shareholders of SGI recently approved the acquisition of shares and interests in Destiny Cable Inc. (DCI) and Destiny Inc. (DI) which are likewise owned by the family of Joseph and Elena Lim.

The plan has been shelved in the past due to delays in the government's approval of the deal. When the transaction was revived, the terms for the acquisition were likewise revised.

Earlier, the plan was for SGI to issue 673.845 million shares. Under the new terms, SGI will issue 1.02 billion shares.

With the planned acquisition, the Destiny Group will be restructured so that the broadband cable infrastructure assets will be owned by DI and the franchise to operate cable facilities and the assets directly necessary for the franchise will be retained by DCI. DI will become a wholly owned subsidiary of SGI, which will henceforth lease its equipment to DCI.

SGI, which went public in 1948, is engaged in the manufacture, distribution and export of consumer electronics.

PLDT mobile unit obtains $100-loan

SMART Communications Inc., the money-spinning cellular unit of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), said yesterday it had obtained a $100-million loan to finance its network expansion.

In a statement, Smart said the lead arrangers of the five-year loan facility were Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi Ltd., Citibank N.A., and ING Bank N.V.

"The purpose of the facility will be to finance equipment and services related to Phase 6 expansion of Smart's global system for mobile communications network, including transmission facilities, information technology systems, and other capital expenditures," said Smart, which is not listed on the stock exchange.

PLDT, the Philippines' largest telecommunications provider, earlier this month reported that nine-month earnings were up 75 percent on a year earlier at P1.4 billion.

Earnings were driven by a 51-percent rise in nine-month revenues from Smart Communications. *Reuters*

National Power Corporation
GENERATION COMPANY 1

GENCO-1

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
UNDER E.O. 40
AD NO. GENCO 1 2002-05

Bidding Date: December 19, 2002 10:00 AM
Pre-bid Conference: December 11, 2002 10 00 AM

The following manufacturers/suppliers/distributors, whether 100% local or at most 40% foreign-owned are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids to be opened publicly at 4th Floor Conference Room, National Power Corporation GENCO 1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila.

a. Duly licensed Individuals/Sole Proprietorship.
b Partnership or Corporations.
c. Manufacturers/Suppliers/Distributors forming into a joint venture,
d. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA)

SOURCE OF FUNDING: INTERNAL CASH GENERATION
APPROVED BUDGET FOR CONTRACT TO BE BID

Inquiry No. 0211-022 Supply of equipment, tools, labor and supervision for the installation of Bottom Ash Slurry Pump Discharge By-Pass Line 1 job P10,000.00

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained on the Procurement Section, Administration Division, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100 00 per Inquiry No starting December 2, 2002 No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution The procurement rules and regulations used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of "Executive Order 40"

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to at least 1% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Certified Check, Bank Draft Irrevocable Letter of Credit, or 1 5% of the approved budget in the form of Bank Guarantee, or 2 5% of the approved budget in the form of Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission

The corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality contained therein and accept the bids considered most advantageous to the corporation.

(Sgd.) LORNA T. DY
Manager
Professional Services Department

(PDI – Nov. 30, 2002)

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DISPOSAL SALE

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For further information, please call Mr. Romy S. Arquisola or Mr. Alfredo Q. Daluz at Tel. Nos. 831-2271, 514-4229, 514-4234 and 514-4236.

(PDI -- Nov. 30 & Dec. 1, 2002)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, November 29, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	18 25	17 75	18.25	174,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	39	39	38.5	39	353,000
China Banking Corp.	615	615	615	615	490
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	19	19	19	19	9,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26	25.5	25.5	112,500
First E-Bank Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	32	31	31	224,000
Prudential Bank	450	450	400	400	40,670
Philippine National Bank	24	25	24	25	36,900
Phil. Savings Bank	24	27	24	27	1,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	9.8	9.9	9.7	9.9	14,000
Security Bank Corp.	11	11	10.75	10.75	14,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	18 25	18 25	18.25	18.25	7,700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.35	0.35	0 35	0.35	60,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1310	1310	1310	1310	200
Sun Life Financial Serv	950	950	930	940	1,350
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	15.25	15 25	15	15.25	13,200
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.43	0 42	0.42	1,820,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	427.5	437 5	427.5	435	26,390
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.025	2,700,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.014	0.016	0.013	0.016	800,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	282 5	290	277.5	290	219,730
Philweb Corp.	0 011	0 012	0.01	0.012	432,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	10.5	10 5	9.4	9.4	124,000
Manila Electric Co. B	10.75	10.75	10	10.25	2,264,200
Petron Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.56	1.6	328,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0 92	0 92	0 92	0.92	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	214,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	20,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.28	160,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATE D PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0 26	0 26	0 26	0.26	1,000,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	64,100
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34	34	34	34	246,200
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58 5	76,600
San Miguel Corp. B	64 5	64.5	64	64 5	827,500
Universal Robina Corp.	3 5	3 5	3.1	3.1	84,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4 7	4 75	4.7	4 75	1,619,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2 34	2.34	2.32	2.32	96,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	10,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.36	2.36	2.36	2.36	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0 125	0 14	0.125	0 14	470,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.08	0 08	0.08	0.08	200,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	600,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.1	1.18	1.1	1.18	210,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	10	10.25	9.9	10.25	129,500
Ionics Inc.	0.95	0 95	0.9	0.9	570,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	1.3	1.36	1.3	1.36	335,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.58	0 59	0.57	0 59	3,980,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.38	0 38	0.38	0.38	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.185	0.185	0.155	0.155	18,480,000
Music Corp	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	200,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	150,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.032	0 045	0.032	0.045	900,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0 04	0 04	0 04	0.04	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1 24	1 24	1.24	1.24	3,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	300,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0 5	0.51	0 5	0.51	60,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.035	0 035	0 035	0.035	2,200,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10 75	11	10 75	11	13,400
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0 35	0 37	0 35	0.37	3,100,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0 1	0 1	0 1	0.1	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	15	15 5	15	15.5	32,100
Jollibee Warrants	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.75	17,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc -Warrant	0.0026	0 0026	0.0026	0.0026	26,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	5.2	5 2	4.55	5.2	16,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.95	4.95	2,222,000
Cityland Development Corp.	2	2	2	2	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	3,880,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0 89	0.9	0.89	0 89	1,410,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1 96	1 98	1.94	1.98	940,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.15	0 15	0 15	0.15	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc	5 2	5 2	5	5.1	2,220,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0 003	0 003	0 003	0.003	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0 165	0.17	0.165	0.17	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0 17	0 17	0 17	0.17	420,000
Omico Corp.	0.0022	0 0022	0.0022	0.0022	36,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res	0 0095	0 0095	0 0095	0 0095	1,000,000
Interport Res.	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	18,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0 0024	0.0022	0.0022	13,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0 024	0.024	0 024	0.024	700,000
South China Resources Inc	0.3	0.3	0 3	0.3	20,000

CURRENCIES

Nov. 29, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.009285	1.000000	53.589000
Japan	Yen	0.008256	0.008180	0.438400
United Kingdom	Pound	1.562071	1.547700	82.939700
Hongkong	Dollar	0.129421	0.128230	6.871700
Switzerland	Franc	0.677828	0.671592	35.989900
Canada	Dollar	0.641957	0.636051	34.085300
Singapore	Dollar	0.571801	0.566540	30.360300
Australia	Dollar	0.560465	0.555309	29.758500
Bahrain	Dinar	2.677220	2.652590	142.149600
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.269136	0.266660	14.290000
Brunei	Dollar	0.570960	0.565707	30.315700
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000112	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.023271	0.023057	1.235600
UAE	Dirham	0.274792	0.272264	14.590400
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.990800	53.096000
Argentina	Peso	0.290024	0.287356	15.399100
Brazil	REAL	0.281138	0.278552	14.927300
Denmark	Kroner	0.134645	0.133406	7.149100
India	Rupee	0.020953	0.020760	1.112500
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CENTRO Escolar University's new stock transfer agent is the Professional Stock Transfer Inc.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings Inc. clarified that it is not a party to the negotiations between workers of SM branches and SM Mart Inc.

* * *

PHILWEB Corp. announced it signed a memorandum of agreement with the **Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.** for it to provide Pagcor with technical consultancy and services related to the Internet Sports Betting.

* * *

BAGUIO Gold Holdings Corp. announced the resignation of Regina Ymana as chief finance officer of the company.

* * *

SOLID Group Inc.'s capital structure after its acquisition of shares in Destiny Cable Inc. and/or Destiny Inc. shall be as follows: Lim Family and officers, from 68.47 percent ownership to 79.05-percent; public, from 21.22 percent to 14.1 percent and treasury shares, from 10.31 percent to 6.85 percent. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

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4 Aircon Maintenance	2.817,461 00	3,408 70
5 Pest Control Services	190,575 00	952 87
Laundry Services		1 000 00

Source of Funding PHC FUNDS

The lists of registration requirements will be issued at Bids & Awards Secretariat (BAC), Purchasing Div., PHC Basement MAB East Ave., Q.C. Only eligible bidders shall be required to pay the non-refundable fee The deadline for the submission of requirements is on December 20, 2002 not later than 5 00 PM For any inquiry, please call Purchasing Div at 922-05-74

The PHC reserves the right to reject any or all bids offering any reason to waive any formality or technicality and to award any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to PHC The PHC neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids nor does the PHC guarantee an award will be made

(Sgd.) RAUL D. JARA, M.D.
Chairman BAC

(PDI--Nov 29, 30 & Dec. 6 & 7, 2002)

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AWARDS FOR SALE

CUP awards fraudulent, marketing firm claims

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A LOCAL marketing company has filed a complaint with the Department of Trade and Industry seeking to stop what it claims as fraudulent awards given by the Consumers Union of the Philippines to select goods and services.

Market Bridges Philippines Inc. president Herbert Sancianco urged Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II to investigate CUP on how it determined the best consumer products and services in the country in its annual consumer awards.

"CUP should be issued a cease-and-desist order to protect others and to avoid any embarrassment to the DTI or the current administration," Sancianco said.

Sancianco claimed that CUP would inform select companies, particularly multinational corporations, that they had been chosen as the most outstanding in their category and whether that were interested in putting up a "sponsorship fee" that would bankroll the cost of the souvenir program and awards night.

If one corporation spurns it, Sancianco said CUP would just move on to the next company until it got a company on its list that would agree to its terms and would, therefore, be adjudged the best in its category.

Apart from its alleged solicitation of winners, Sancianco questioned CUP's procedure in picking the best in the respective categories.

"CUP does not have the quantifiable means of making superlative claims that a product or service is the best in terms of manufacturing and most preferred by consumers.

He noted in his letter that a multinational electronics firm was cited as the most outstanding manufacturer of cellular phones in the Philippines even though the company only imports its units from factories abroad.

He doubted whether CUP conducted a poll or research to justify having two companies named as best of their lot in meat processing and toothpaste.

The CUP said earlier it would not sign up with the DTI's accreditation program, arguing that officials of the 40-year-old group want to maintain its independence.

CUP president Quirino Marquinez disclosed that CUP's board did not see any need for an accreditation from the trade department, saying the group had been functioning well as a consumer watchdog since 1962.

The group has never been sanctioned by the government since it was formed, Marquinez stressed.

The trade department has issued a new set of guidelines on the accreditation of consumer organizations in the country.

These new guidelines are meant to ensure that only legitimate private sector groups are involved in the trade department's consumer rights advocacy and enforcement campaign.

Under Department Administrative Order 10, accredited consumer groups can undertake information campaigns, join the trade department's consultations and report violations of the Consumer Act of the Philippines.

Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. issued the new rules shortly after issuing a warning to consumers against unscrupulous consumer organizations engaging in the unethical practice of handing out citations for best products and services and misrepresenting themselves as being sanctioned by the trade department.

CUP recently held its annual consumer awards project, which cited the best brands in specific categories.

The trade department has complained about the group's use of the phrase "in cooperation with the DTI" without getting prior clearance from the agency.

Stocks end higher

From page B1

"This has a long-term effect on the market," he added. "It will put more investors at bay."

The Philippine stock index rose 4.56 points or 0.44 percent to end at the day high of 1,047.22. The index seesawed in a tight range of just nine points.

But the broader All Shares Index slid 0.15 percent to 642.84 points.

The market has lost 10.35 percent so far this year but is still outperforming bigger bourses in the region such as Hong Kong and Singapore.

All Suerte Securities research consultant Ron Rodrigo said the market's recovery toward the close of trade could be due to month-end "window-dressing" ahead of a widely expected year-end rally.

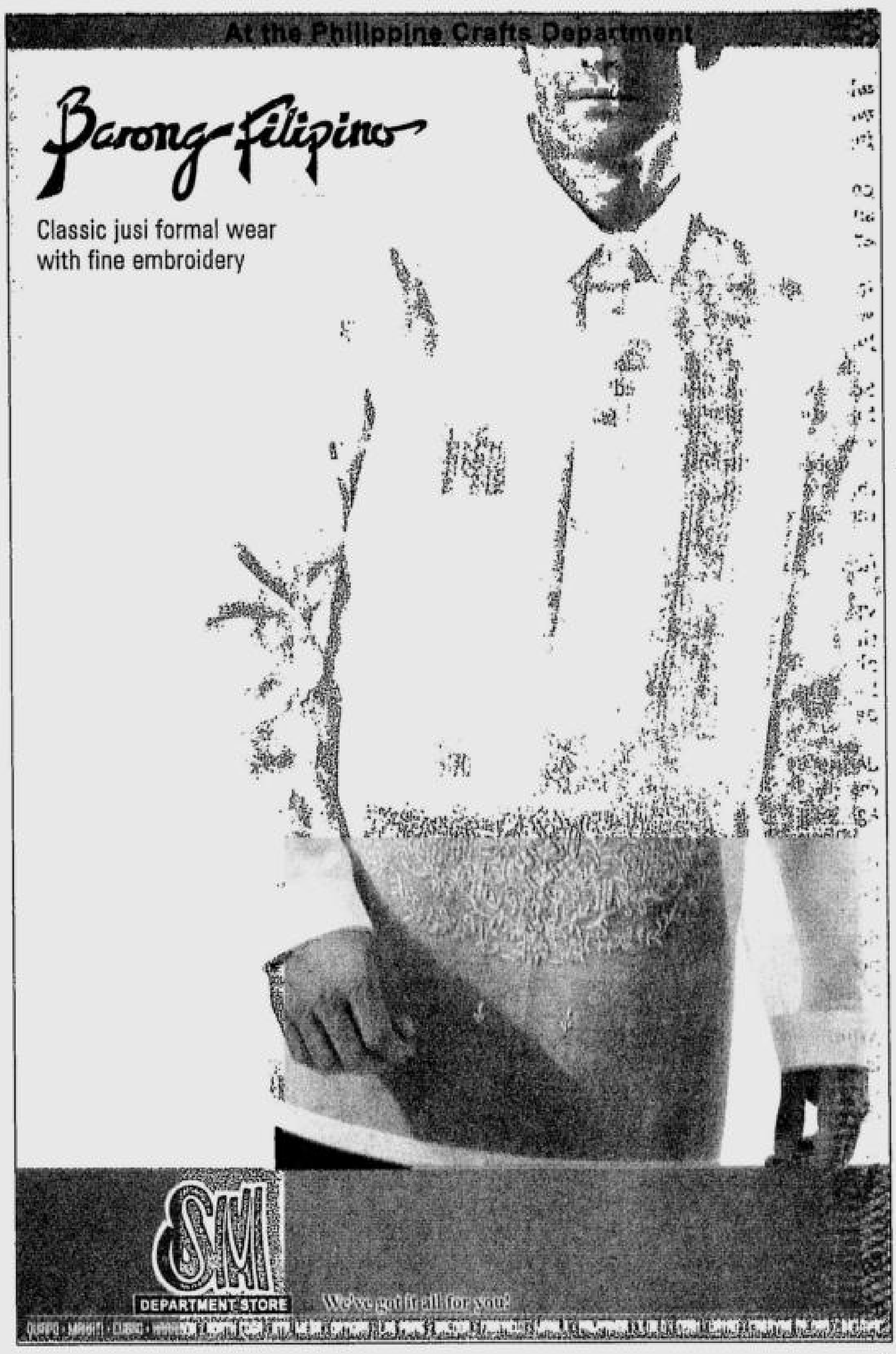
Traders said there could be a rebound next week with several issues ripe for bargain hunting. Immediate resistance is seen at the 1,060-point mark.

In the broader market, turnover rose slightly to P267.20 million from the previous session's P246.59 million. Losers and gainers were equal at 23 each and 39 issues were unchanged.

Dominant phone firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. led the market higher, gaining P7.50 or 2.65 percent to P290. Traders said the stock was oversold and was ripe for a technical rebound.

Manila Electric Co.'s B-shares, which are open to foreigners, were the biggest losers. They fell 4.65 percent to P10.25 on lingering concerns on the utility's financial health after the Supreme Court ruled it must refund billions of pesos to customers for years of overcharging. Meralco's A shares slid 5.05 percent to P9.40.

Reuters, AFP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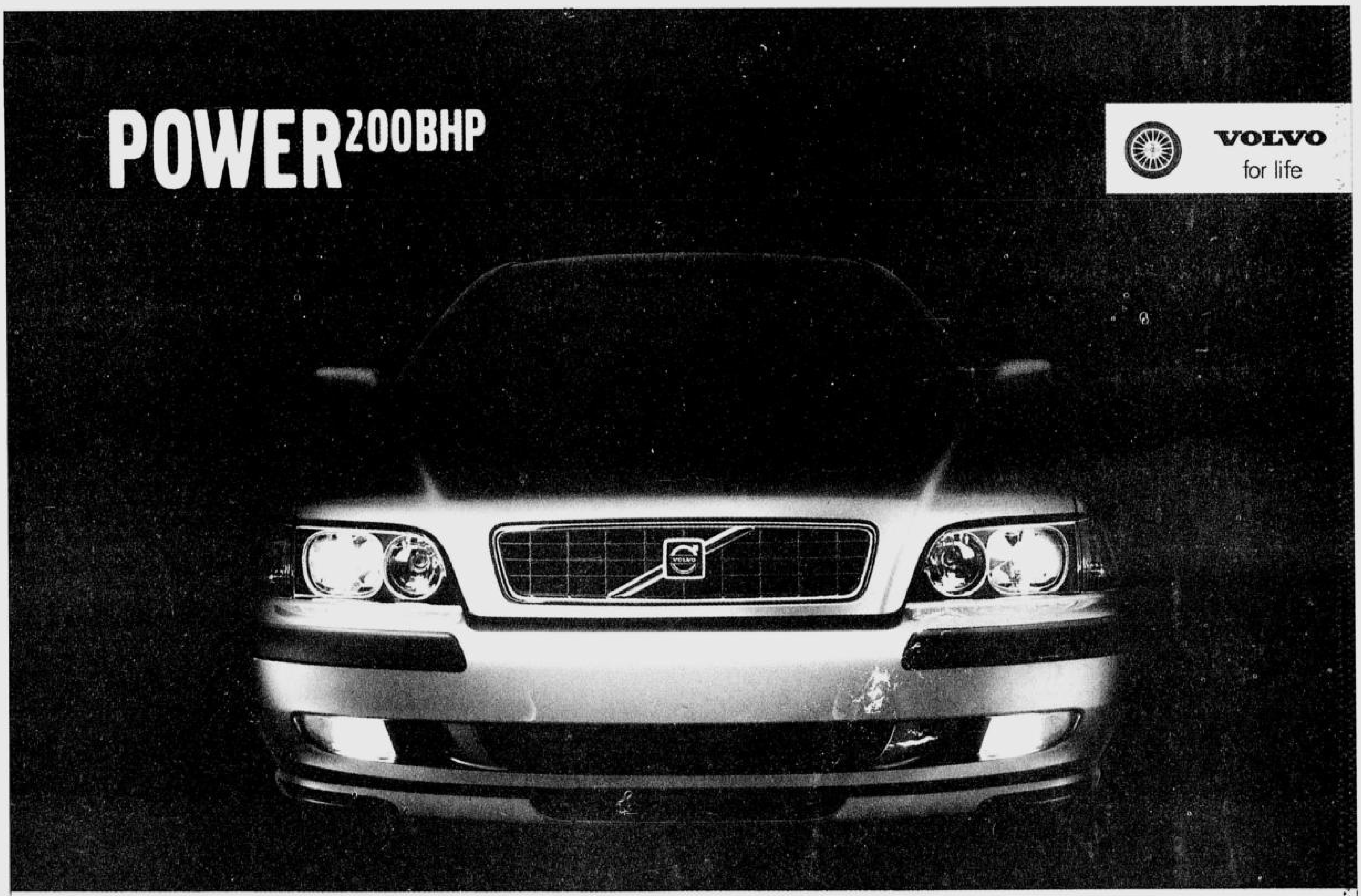
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OCTOBER FIGURES

Japan's jobless rate hits record high of 5.5%

TOKYO—Japan's jobless rate returned to a record high of 5.5 percent in October and is expected to remain high as other figures released Friday showed falls in industrial output, consumer prices and household spending.

The unemployment rate was up from 5.4 percent in September, the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications said.

"The jobless figures were the worst since the end of World War II and will continue to remain high given the severe economic conditions," said Hidehiko Fujii, an economist at Japan Research Institute.

The jobless rate for men rose to an all-time high of 5.9 percent from 5.8 percent in September and the rate for women hit 5.1 percent from 4.9 percent.

"Apart from ongoing corporate restructuring, men were losing jobs because their companies went bankrupt," Fujii said.

The number of people out of work surged to 3.62 million in the month, up 100,000 from a year earlier, marking the 19th consecutive monthly increase.

"We cannot be optimistic. We have to consider various measures and create a solid safety net," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference.

Japan's jobless rate previously touched 5.5 percent in December last year.

Economists said there was no reason to expect unemployment to fall because more companies were slashing staff and salaries in an attempt to remain profitable.

"Companies had no choice but to cut more jobs and wages because their profits were so meager under the current economy," said Masahi Murata, an economist at UFJ Institute.

Troubled computer maker Fujitsu Ltd. said last month that it would cut 7,100 jobs in the year to March in a bid to stem losses, while Sanyo Electric Co. Ltd. said on Friday that it planned to lower some wages by up to 30 percent.

"Workers, for their part, continue to worry about their future and job security and had no inclination to spend freely," noted Murata.

Spending by salaried households declined 0.7 percent in October from a year earlier after rising 4.1 percent the previous month, the ministry said. Average wages fell 1.6 percent to 472,935 yen ($3,880).

Firms would likely make further cost cuts in future as demand falters at home and overseas.

Japan's industrial output in October fell an unexpected 0.3 percent from the previous month due to a slump in machinery orders and automobile production, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said.

"Production posted its second straight month of declines ... the forecasts for November and December do not show signs of an advance," said an official.

The grim figures prompted the ministry to cut an assessment on Japan's output trend for the first time since February to flat from moderate growth.

Adding to the gloom, Japanese consumer prices in October slipped 0.9 percent from a year earlier, marking the 38th consecutive monthly drop.

Deflation deters consumption as people wait for prices to fall further, drives corporate profits lower and debt rises in real terms.

Last week Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi ordered a supplementary budget for the current financial year to combat the 12-year slump in the world's second largest economy.

The package will include an extra 3 trillion yen for public works projects and to strengthen the social safety net.

But share prices rose despite the bleak data, with the Nikkei-225 average of the Tokyo Stock Exchange closing up 0.4 percent at 9,215.56 points. *AFP*

Asian stocks inch up

SINGAPORE—Asian stocks edged higher on Friday as investors embraced technology issues again, while the dollar steadied after a stumble following car bomb and missile attacks on Israeli tourists in Africa.

Tokyo shares ended at a two-month high, although weak economic data and caution ahead of the release of bank reform plans limited gains.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 average closed 0.42 percent higher at 9,215.56, while the broader Topix index gained 0.52 percent to 892.71.

But markets were apprehensive after a deadly suicide bombing in Kenya and an attempt to shoot down an airliner full of Israeli tourists cast suspicion on al-Qaida as the likely mastermind.

"I feel uneasy," said Yorinobu Hara, general manager at Asahi Tokyo Investment Trust Management.

"The attack against the private airplane reminded me of the 9/11 suicide airplane attacks," he said, noting that Wall Street may retreat next week after a shortened session later in the day following the Thanksgiving Day holiday.

The resilience of Japanese shares came in the face of weaker-than-expected industrial output data, which together with jobs data released earlier showed a sputtering economic recovery in Japan.

Fujitsu Ltd. surged 4 percent, having recovered 24 percent from a multi-decade low hit earlier this month as foreign investors buy back shares in the computer chipmaker and other battered tech issues, traders said.

Most other Asian markets were also higher, with the bellwether Morgan Stanley Asia-Pacific Free Index up 0.28 percent by mid-afternoon. *Reuters*

United pledges cutbacks

CHICAGO—United Airlines, dealt an untimely labor setback in its push to avoid bankruptcy, pledged Thursday to still achieve $5.2 billion in cutbacks and said it is reopening talks in an urgent new attempt to get concessions from its mechanics—the lone holdouts.

The airline's statement, coming a day after mechanics decisively rejected a 7-percent wage cut, signaled a continuing effort to carry out its restructuring outside of bankruptcy court. But United acknowledged that the fate of its financial recovery plan hinges on securing givebacks from its 13,000 mechanics.

"We intend to achieve the full labor cost savings included in our business plan," the company said. "To that end, we are initiating immediate discussions with the leadership of the International Association of Machinists District 141-M to develop contract modifications that will achieve the same savings level called for in the agreement that was not ratified this morning."

"Reaching our $5.2-billion target is essential if we are to secure federally backed loans and avoid a Chapter-11 filing," United said. *AP*

A WORKER removes stains from a glass window advertisement at a shopping mall in Shanghai. Aggressive advertising has blossomed in the country after China ushered a "new stage" of economic reform when it joined the WTO. China spent $7 billion in the first six months of this year and ranked first in Asia's advertising market, official figures said. REUTERS

Frustrated Japanese fear for their jobs

TOKYO—Record unemployment, corporate cost-cutting and unrelenting deflation—it's nothing new for frustrated Japanese, many of whom have resigned themselves to more of the same for some time to come.

"It's not going to change any time soon," said Miwa Yokotani, her voice rising in anger when asked on Friday about the prospects for the economy just hours after a slew of data showed prospects for recovery slipping away.

The 30-year-old freelance worker at a job placement company in Tokyo complained the government has done little to spur growth and had no faith that the administration of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi could set the economy on a healthy path.

"They've done nothing till now, why should anything be different tomorrow"? she asked.

It was a sentiment echoed by others interviewed on the streets of Tokyo after the government said the nation's unemployment rate in October had returned to 5.5 percent, the highest level of the post-war era.

"I don't think much of this government—there are no real reformers in it and we need a thorough change," said 55-year-old Katsuhara Kawasaki, a self-described "salaryman," or white collar worker, at electronics giant Fujitsu.

Fujitsu was one of the latest blue-chip giants to announce heavy job cuts, saying in late October that it would shed 7,100 jobs in the business year to next March to cope with a business slump.

"It's not going to get better," Kawasaki lamented while taking a drag on a cigarette outside a central Tokyo building.

"I'm worried that with the economy this bad, I'll eventually get laid off." Other data released in the morning provided further evidence that a nine-month economic recovery is running out of steam, with industrial output falling in October and deflation remaining a nasty thorn in the economy's side.

And as the economy struggles, consumers are set to keep an even firmer grip on their purse strings—not surprising considering that wages are falling and this year's average winter bonus is expected to plunge by a record 5 percent or more.

For the average Japanese, the labor market appears to have fallen into a familiar trend of bad news followed by worse, a perception the government disputes. *Reuters*

US tariff plan to jump-start trade talks

PARIS—WTO chief Supachai Panitchpakdi said Thursday that a US plan to eliminate global tariffs on consumer and industrial goods was a "positive contribution" to jump-starting sluggish trade negotiations.

"We need ambitious proposals to get the round moving forward ... and we need leadership. I welcome this initiative by the US government to help us push for more dynamic momentum," Panitchpakdi told reporters after meeting with French President Jacques Chirac at the presidential Elysee palace.

The United States on Tuesday unveiled a bold plan to eliminate global tariffs on consumer and industrial goods by 2015, saying it would benefit developing countries as well as the US economy.

The plan is to be presented to the World Trade Organization in Geneva next week.

WTO director general Panitchpakdi said the US initiative "actually sets the kind of standard that we can aim at and it sets also the standard for other areas of negotiations to follow. I find this a positive contribution." The 145-member WTO is due to conclude the so-called Doha round of global trade liberalization negotiations, begun a year ago in the Qatari capital, by January 2005. *AFP*

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Cut costs, agri officials advise tuna exporters

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture said yesterday the local tuna industry should look for other ways to trim their production costs to remain competitive in the US market.

The department issued the statement in view of the approval of the Andean Trade Preference Expansion Act.

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said in an interview that by cutting production costs, tuna exporters could eventually lower their landed prices despite the tariffs set under the Andean pact.

The pact allows Andean countries to export tariff-free tuna to the United States, while other countries, including the Philippines, are slapped tariffs of between 6 and 12.5 percent.

Montemayor said tuna producers should look for ways to lower the cost of their exports to retain their US buyers and compete with tuna exports from Andean countries.

"We should think of ways to bring down our production costs so that even if our tuna cans have a disadvantage of 6 percent in-tariff vis-à-vis the tuna in pouches from the Andean countries," he said.

Montemayor said the tuna industry could also look at the possibility of producing tuna in pouches.

BMW to wait for Afta to unfold before firming up Asean plans

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

GERMAN luxury carmaker BMW will wait and see how the Asean Free Trade Area unfolds after next year before firming up its regional manufacturing and marketing strategy that would most likely involve a parts manufacturing venture in the Philippines, company officials said yesterday.

In an interview, BMW Philippines president Mark Gilbert said the company was likely to keep the status quo throughout its Asean operations after 2003, when duties on all goods made and traded within the region, including BMW vehicles, would be capped at no more than 5 percent.

Gilbert said BMW's factories would still serve their home markets even with Afta, which meant BMW Philippines would continue to churn out Series 3 models at its Bicutan plant, which now produces 500 to 600 units a year.

The carmaker imports Series 5 and 7, Z and X5 models from Germany and North America.

BMW Philippines, which accounts for 65 percent of the premiere car segment, sells between 700 and 750 units a year.

Its biggest plant in Southeast Asia is in Thailand, where it produces 3,000 to 4,000 units of Series 3, 5 and 7 models.

Gilbert said BMW's Thai plant were producing just enough to meet Thailand's demand.

Gilbert said the BMW group would first observe how the Afta develops and see how the company could take advantage of opportunities in a borderless market of 500 million.

Based on prevailing market conditions, however, Gilbert said the Philippines was unlikely to be a major supplier for the region considering its tiny domestic market. Local sales account for a little over one percent of BMW's annual sales of 61,000 units in Asia.

He added the country was a deviation in a region where the right-hand drive vehicle was the norm.

At best, Gilbert said, the Philippines was likely to be a site for auto parts manufacturing and exports.

He said Philippine-based parts makers Temic (electronic control units for seats) and Tahata (airbags) are global suppliers of BMW.

More than the onset of a single Asean market, Gilbert said BMW was more anxious to see the government finalize the road map for the development of the local assembly industry which would introduce reforms in taxation, used vehicle import policy, export incentives, and tariff protection.

Gilbert said the government's proposal to shift from engine size to sticker price as basis for the excise tax would help level the playing field.

Cleaner fuel to have minimal impact on prices

THE PHILIPPINES said yesterday it would enforce higher quality standards for gasoline as scheduled from Jan. 1, and that the measures under the Clean Air Act likely would have only a minimal impact on oil prices.

Lawmakers earlier planned to delay the implementation to avoid putting pressure on already rising pump prices and making the country's fuel supply more vulnerable.

But the postponement was dropped after world oil prices stabilized when Iraq allowed UN arms inspections to resume.

"The reason for us to push through with the deferment is no longer as urgent as before," Energy Undersecretary Jose Emmanuel de Dios told reporters. "Prices are going down, thus the effect on consumers would be minimal."

Almost all the country's oil refiners have said they are ready to comply with the provisions of the Clean Air Act of 1999.

The law specifies that the volume of aromatics in unleaded gasoline should fall to 35 percent from 42 percent and that benzene be cut to 2 percent from 4 percent by Jan. 1.

Aromatics are additives used to raise the octane levels of fuel but they have been found to contain elements harmful to the ozone layer. Benzene plays a role in causing cancer.

"We are individually meeting with them (oil refiners), advising them that the Clean Air Act will push through next year," De Dios said.

"I have no problem with the big three (refiners)," he said.

"Either they will import the entire gas requirement conforming to the specifications or import blending components." Industry estimates show oil prices may increase from 80 centavos to P1.50 (1.5 to 2.8 US cents) per liter if companies blend components that raise gasoline quality or import gasoline that meets the new standards.

Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. said they were ready to comply with the law if it was implemented on the first day of 2003.

Reuters

Internet chain to earn P100M from BOI perks

NETOPIA Computer Technologies Inc., Internet café chain of ePLDT, is seen earning around P100 million next year with a new corporate vehicle recently registered with the Board of Investments.

Company officials said during the opening ceremonies of Netopia's 45th branch on Thursday that registering the Internet café chain with the BOI should result in tax holidays that could help the company expand its operations.

The new corporate vehicle, Digital Paradise Inc., will take over the operations of Netopia's existing branches within the next few months. It has also committed to invest at least P100 million for further expansion.

Netopia president Raymond Ricafort said Digital Paradise had plans to open another 16 branches nationwide for 2003 alone. It already had 42 branches in Metro Manila, Cebu, Baguio and Cagayan de Oro.

As part of the new company's consolidation efforts, Netopia franchise owners would be given shares in the new holding company in exchange for the branches they were currently operating, he explained.

Consolidation is expected to be completed by August or September next year.

Digital Paradise is 50-percent owned by Netopia, 40 percent by ePLDT and 10 percent by former Smart Communications Inc. president Orlando Vea's Newnet Holdings Inc.

Netopia's 45th and biggest branch at the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong is the first branch under the new company. Around P6 million has been invested for this 131-workstation Internet café.

The company disclosed that it had also started soft-opening branches at SM Bicutan, SM Pampanga, SM Fairview, SM Cagayan de Oro, SM Cebu, Abanao Square in Baguio and Southwestern University in Cebu.

Abigail L. Ho

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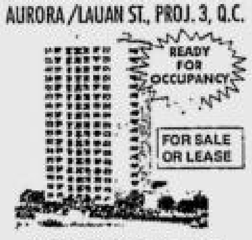

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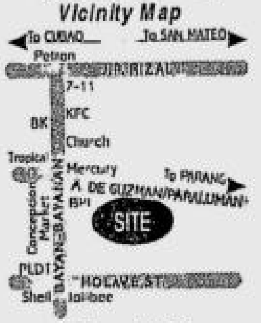

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FREE Care Giver Seminar 5614990 5638009

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For SM Megamall 09178390638

★Ofc Staff 18/45 w/w/o exp★ START ASAP CALL 9134470 Direct Hiring Look Zobel

★Ofc Staff 18/45 w/w/o exp★ START ASAP 3390166 DORIS

★OFC/ADMIN STAF 18-45y/o★ w/ w/o Exp 9121488 Clifford

HRD PERSONNEL 09173660641 FATIMA

HRD Stf 0919-4639391 Rose

HRD/Ofc Staff 091662303222 Jel

HRD/Ofc Staff 09186532375 Red

INTERIOR DESIGNERS Com. Lit. Apply Dorothy's Virra Mall GHills 7213187 10-6pm Fresh Graduate Welcome

LADY DENTIST UE GRAD CALL 5228069

NEED STAFF 8712449 EDRON

OFC PERSONNEL 09207692798 FLOR

OFC PERSONNEL 09203844500 KIM

Ofc Satff 551-2388 Ms. Yna

OFC STAFF 09192535623 MIKE

Ofc Staff 09198279443 Rupert

OFC STAFF/0920-2376713/BENEDICT

Ofc Staff/HRD START ASAP w/hi salary 7812681 Ms Mary

Ofc/HRD Staff 09179171958 Roma

Office Job Fair Opening Above Average Pay! Graduate / Undergraduate 916-8371 • 0918-5219129 Contact: Mr. Romulo

Office Staff/09178969388/Abby

PROMO GIRLS 527-1590

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5276418

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of Enrique Voltaire E. Garcia was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. 7530, Page 6, Book XVI, Series of 2002 before Notary Public Romeo C. Cruz of Quezon City (PDI-Nov. 30, Dec. 7 & 14, 2002)

NOTICE is hereby given on execution of extrajudicial settlement of the estate of SALVADOR ABUEG as per Doc 94, Page 20, Book XXVIII, Series of 2002 before Notary Public Atty. Pio Kenneth Dasal.
(PDI-Nov. 16, 23 & 30, 2002)

PERSONAL

St. Jude & Blessed Mother Thank you so much for granting my wish-MALOU

---

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Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY, DELIVERY, AND INSTALLATION OF IT EQUIPMENT for the Department of Education Computerization Program.**

The approved budget for this contract is **P 82, 500,000.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **December 5, 2002, 9:30 a.m. at the PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **November 26, 2002** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Nine Thousand Pesos (Php 9,000.00).**

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **December 19, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. 563-9402 or 563-9374.

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – Nov. 23 & 30, 2002)

IMMEDIATE HIRING

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

- Male & Female - with pleasing personality
- Preferably with medical or pharma background. But not necessary

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San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City
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Wanted: **PROVINCIAL DEALERS FOR HCP NATURALS**

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of Capitol City Sports and Country Club, Inc. and Balcon Trading Corporation shortening the terms of their respective existence up to **December 31, 2002,** thereby dissolving the said corporations on said date have been approved by their respective Board of Directors on **July 16, 2002** and ratified by the stockholders representing at least 2/3 of the capital stock of the corporation on **August 17, 2002.**

All persons having claims against said corporations are requested to present their claims at:

Room 1505 The Centerpoint Building
Julia Vargas Avenue cor. Garnet Road
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No(s).: 687-7109 / 631-0337
Fax No.: 631-0780

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the legal dissolution of the aforesaid corporations.

(Sgd.) **LEONIDES S. RESPICIO**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI - Nov. 30, 2002)

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CAPITOL CITY SPORTS AND COUNTRY CLUB, INC.

CALL FOR PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTION

Notice is hereby given to all stockholders of Capitol City Sports and Country Club, Inc., with unpaid subscriptions, including — Rodolfo F. Almario, Fabian Amora, Gervacio G. Ascalon, Ofelia T. Castell, Manuel B. Curato, Tirso C. De Castro, Dominador C. De Guzman, Eduardo L. De Guzman, Wilfredo C. De Guzman, Estrelita G. Del Rosario, Amante R. Dumag, Bernadette Enriquez, Hernani G. Espia, Rolando A. Florendo, Santiago M. Kapunan, Billy F. Lim, Alice M. Luis, Ernesto S. Manalang, George C. Misa, Fernando S. Nabong, Oscar C. Noble, Leoncio A. Palanca, Concordia M. Pascual, Benedicto L. Pe, Rufo Peralta, Angelita S. Pujante, Arturo A. Ramos, Alfredo S. Roxas, Barbara A. Salanguit, Gregorio L. Salazar, Felipe F. Salonga, Eluderio S. Salvo, Manuel Q. Santiago, Norma A. Sargan, Josellio Sayson, Celia Sta. Ana, Arsenio R. Topacio, Jr., La Verne T. Tuazon, Rodolfo T. Tuazon, Jaime B. Villanueva, Julito R. Villanueva and Ramon F. Villavicencio to fully pay the balance of your respective subscriptions not later than December 31, 2002, otherwise, the Club will declare your shares as delinquent, your names as subscribers delisted and your partial payments forfeited in favor of the corporation.

Please remit your payment to the Treasurer, Mr. Wilfrido A. Zabarte at:

Rm. 1505, The Centerpoint Building
Julia Vargas Avenue cor. Garnet Road
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. 687-7109 / 631-0337
Fax No. 631-0780

(Sgd.) **LEONIDES S. RESPICIO**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI – Nov. 30, 2002)

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SOFTWARE ENGINEERS

Job Summary:
Responsible for the planning, design, development improvement and maintenance of a programming application or system, usually part of a large-scale program. Develops new or modifies and improves existing engineering designs or techniques related to systems, products, devices, components, processes, methods, equipment, facilities or production.

Qualifications:
- BS Computer Engineering / BS Computer Science graduates or other related fields;
- With good scholastic record;
- Must be knowledgeable with C / C++ / Java programming languages;
- Must also be knowledgeable with Software Development processes;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Proficient in the English language.

SOFTWARE PROJECT ENGINEERS

Job Summary:
Responsible for solving major software technical issues that impact schedule and the ability to meet requirements.

Qualifications:
- B.S. Computer Engineering / B.S. Computer Science graduates or other related fields;
- Minimum of 5 years I.T. work experience, at least two (2) years of which is project management;
- Must be proficient in MS Project and other Microsoft productivity tools;
- Must be able to organize and manage project work plans, provide comprehensive project status reports and activities, follow-up on deliverables and see to it that milestones are met on schedule;
- Team player and can adapt to varying client and project requirements.

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THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
Lexmark Research & Development Corporation
8/F Globe Isla Plaza, Samar Loop cor. Panay Road,
Cebu Business Park, Cebu City

or

You can e-mail your resumés to: lrdchrd@lexmark.com

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Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
Inter-Agency Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Procurement Service through the Department of Education (DepEd) is inviting Manufacturers/Suppliers to bid for the **Supply and Delivery of School Desk and Armchair** in the following regions:

Regional Distribution	Elementary (Table & Chairs)	Budget Allocation	Secondary (Armchair)	Budget Allocation
Region I	Lot 1 12,673 Sets	12,673.20	Lot 2 8,585 Pcs.	4,292.26
Region II	Lot 3 10,746 Sets	10,745.68	Lot 4 7,512 Pcs.	3,755.91
Region III	Lot 5 26,846 Sets	26,846.39	Lot 6 16,402 Pcs.	8,201.12
Region IV	Lot 7 46,805 Sets	46,805.49	Lot 8 28,597 Pcs.	14,298.28
Region V	Lot 9 19,662 Sets	10,661.62	Lot 10 9,954 Pcs.	4,977.00
Region VI	Lot 11 20,855 Sets	20,854.86	Lot 12 13,903 Pcs.	6,951.62
Region VII	Lot 13 25,199 Sets	25,198.96	Lot 14 15,915 Pcs.	7,957.57
Region VIII	Lot 15 15,949 Sets	15,948.92	Lot 16 9,636 Pcs.	4,817.90
Region IX	Lot 17 14,923 Sets	14,923.14	Lot 18 7,886 Pcs.	3,943.03
Region X	Lot 19 11,319 Sets	11,319.11	Lot 20 5,379 Pcs.	2,689.69
Region XI	Lot 21 23,669 Sets	23,669.44	Lot 22 12,357 Pcs.	6,178.53
Region XII	Lot 23 12,817 Sets	12,817.00	Lot 24 7,874 Pcs.	3,937.25
CARAGA	Lot 25 10,829 Sets	10,828.82	Lot 26 6,360 Pcs.	3,180.00
NCR	Lot 27 27,268 Sets	27,268.00	Lot 28 26,983 Pcs.	13,491.34
CAR	Lot 29 5,190 Sets	5,190.16	Lot 30 3,136 Pcs.	1,567.86

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders upon submission of letter of intent and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Three Hundred Pesos (P300.00) starting **November 29 to December 2, 2002** at the **Procurement Service-PURCHASING DIVISION** or visit the PS Website *http://www.procurementservice.org.*

A pre-bid conference will be held on **December 3, 2002, 2:00 PM at Bulwagan ng Karunungan Rizal Building I, DepEd Complex, Pasig City.** The Submission and Opening of Bids will be on **December 17, 2002, 10:00 AM** at the same place mentioned above.

Procurement Service reserves the right to reject any or all bids waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI--Nov.23 & 30, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Procurement Service
Inter-Agency Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Procurement Service through the Department of Education (DepEd) is inviting Cooperatives formed by persons with disability and other type of cooperatives who are engaged in the Manufacturing of school furniture to bid for the **Supply and Delivery of School Desk and Armchair** in the following regions:

Regional Distribution	Elementary (Table & Chairs)	Budget Allocation	Secondary (Armchair)	Budget Allocation
Reg. I Ilocos Region	Lot 1 4,224 Sets	4,224,400.00	Lot 2 1,431Pcs.	1,430,800.00
Reg. II Cagayan Valley	Lot 3 3,582 Sets	3,581,900.00	Lot 4 1,252 Pcs	1,252,000.00
Reg. III Central Luzon	Lot 5 8,949 Sets	8,948,800.00	Lot 5 2,734 Pcs.	2,733,700.00
Reg. IV Southern Tagalog	Lot 7 15,602 Sets	15,601,800.00	Lot 8 4,766 Pcs.	4,766,100.00
Reg. V Bicol Region	Lot 9 6,554 Sets	6,553,900.00	Lot 10 1,659 Pcs.	1,659,000.00
Reg. VI Western Visayas	Lot 11 6,952 Sets	6,951,600.00	Lot 12 3,317 Pcs.	2,317,200.00
Reg. VII Central Visayas	Lot 13 8,400 Sets	8,399,700.00	Lot 14 2,653 Pcs.	2,652,500.00
Reg. VIII Eastern Visayas	Lot 15 5,316 Sets	5,316,300.00	Lot 16 1,606 Pcs.	1,606,000.00
Reg. IX Western Mindanao	Lot 17 4,974 Sets	4,974,400.00	Lot 18 1,314 Pcs.	1,314,300.00
Reg. X Northern Mindanao	Lot 19 3,773 Sets	3,773,000.00	Lot 20 897 Pcs.	896,600.00
Reg. XI Southern Mindanao	Lot 21 7,890 Sets	7,889,800.00	Lot 22 2,060 Pcs.	2,059,500.00
Reg. XII Central Mindanao	Lot 23 4,272 Sets	4,272,300.00	Lot 24 1,312 Pcs.	1,312,400.00
CARAGA	Lot 25 3,610 Sets	3,609,600.00	Lot 26 1,060 Pcs.	1,060,000.00
NCR	Lot 27 9,089 Sets	9,089,300.00	Lot 28 4,497 Pcs.	4,497,100.00
CAR	Lot 29 1,730 Sets	1,730,100.00	Lot 30 523 Pcs.	522,600.00

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders upon submission of letter of intent and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Three Hundred Pesos (P300.00) starting **November 29 to December 2, 2002** at the **Procurement Service-PURCHASING DIVISION, Cristobal Street, Paco, Manila** or visit the PS website *http://www.procurementservice.org.*

A pre-bid conference will be held on **December 3, 2002, 2:00 PM** at Bulwagan ng Karunungan Rizal Building, I, DepEd Complex, Pasig City. The Submission and Opening of Bids will be on **December 17, 2002, 10:00 AM** at the same place mentioned above.

Procurement Service reserves the right to reject any or all bids waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – Nov. 23 & 30, 2002)

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OBITUARIES

KING SUE

(Born November 25, 1905)

Peacefully joined his Creator on Wednesday, 27th of November 2002 at the age of 98, together to join his beloved wife, ***Lao Tiong***

His bereaved children, **Diana**— Emilio Sy Eng; **Bennie**(+)—Felicitas Lim; **Romeo**— Rosa Dy Lim(+); **Laura**—Tan Siong Yok; **Lolita**—Rodrigo Ong; **Roger**—Erlinda See; **Rosita**—Eduardo Chua Joy; Eduardo—Paz Lim; **Fernando**—Evelyn Yu; **Ricardo**—Eleanor Chan and all his brothers, sisters, grandchildren, and great grandchildren request fervent prayers and special petitions for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in **LA FUNERARIA PAZ** at Chapel 2 South Wing 143 G. Araneta Avenue corner Kaliraya St., Quezon City.

Interment will be held on **Monday, December 2, 2002 at 1:00 p.m. at the Chinese Cemetery, Manila.**

ESTRELLA TRIUNFANTE Vda. DE PASION

of Piddig, Ilocos Norte and Quezon City

Peacefully joined our Heavenly Father on November 27, 2002 at the age of 84.

Her bereaved children Dennis & Josie, Ching & Erning, Marycar & Manny; grandchildren Algene & Pinky, Malou & Peter, Jed, Jason, Jerome, Joan & Carlo; great grandchildren Justin, Nicole, Paolo, Ian & Sophia, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their residence at 75 Gen. Ave., GSIS Village, Project 8, Quezon City.

Interment will be on December 3 (Wednesday) at the Holy Cross Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at their residence.

We've added another dignified service to keep the memory of your departed loved ones.

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RAOUL S.V. BONNEVIE

Peacefully joined the Lord
on November 28, 2002
at the age of 79.

He is survived by his family **Patricia**, **Edward** and **Ida**, **Irene** and **Ernie**, **Dicky** and **Marichu**, **Winnie** and **Rene**, **Therese** and **Boo**, **Riza**, **Astrid** and **Alvin**, **Jennifer** and **Carlo**, **Una** and **Dominic**; brothers **Honesto**, **Joseph** and **Salvador**; sister **Nena**; nephews and nieces.

His remains lie in state at the Parish Hall of Sanctuary de San Jose, Greenhills, San Juan City.

Final Mass will be on Sunday, December 1, 2002 at 7:30 a.m. at the same venue.

His body will be cremated on Sunday, December 1, 2002 at 10:00 AM at the Manila Memorial Crematorium, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ELEUTERIA "LURING" CRUZ DUQUE

who passed away at the age of 90 on November 21, 2002

wish to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all who offered Masses, prayers, donations and flowers, who kept vigil with us, and in many immeasurable ways condoled with us in our moment of bereavement.

Children **Dany** & **Mely**, **Adeodato Jr.** (**Boy**), **Cesar** & **Imelda**, **Rene** & **Belen**, and **Laurel**; 10 grandchildren & 7 great grandchildren.

> "From darkness let the light shine!"
>
> **Genesis 1:3**

Maricel Rabe-Tomines

Peacefully joined her Creator on November 26, 2002 at the age of 26.

Her loving husband **Frederick T. Tomines**, son **Christian James**, relatives and friends request for prayers for her eternal happiness.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Inc., Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on December 1, 2002 at the Himlayang Pilipino after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

> ***"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."***
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:8**

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

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2228 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City
Tel#: 810-4901-10; Fax# 818-6807; Website: www.pdic.gov.ph; E-mail: bacsecretariat@pdic.gov.ph

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE- GOODS, SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and participate in the bidding for Manpower Services requirements for the period, January 2003 covering a six-month period with possible extension up to December 2003.

PARTICULARS	MANPOWER SERVICES
1. Project Description/Location	Manpower Services on a contractual basis to provide assistance for PDIC operations. The contractual personnel to be provided by the supplier shall include but not limited to professional/administrative and technical persons.
2. Approved Budget	Administrative P5,820,000.00 Technical P1,590,000.00
3. Required Personnel	Administrative 108 personnel Technical 20 personnel
4. Prebid Conference	December 13, 2002 10:00 AM PDIC R/L Extension Office 2227 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City
5. Minimum Experience Requirement	at least 3 years in providing manpower services to government agency/ies or institution/s; and bank/s or financial institution/s

The detailed project particulars and instructions to bidders are contained in the Terms of Reference (TOR) available for issuance to interested bidders starting December 2 to 11, 2002, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the BAC-Secretariat, Ground Floor, PDIC Bldg., 2228 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City from Ms. Baby Quitevis or Ms. Malou Francisco after payment of a non-refundable amount of P200.00.

Criteria for eligibility check, examination and evaluation of bids and postqualification shall be on non-discretionary pass/fail criteria. Only eligible bidders shall be considered for bid awards.

PDIC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof and to accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

PDIC shall in no case be held responsible or liable for any and all costs associated with the bidder's participation in the bidding process regardless of its results.

(Sgd.) **CATHERINE F. BAMBA**
Chairman

(PDI--Nov. 30 & Dec. 7, 2002)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

GENCO 6

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS "AS IS, WHERE IS"

DATE & TIME OF BIDDING: December 13, 2002 at 2:00 PM

The National Power Corporation, Genco-6 invites interested parties to bid on various unserviceable/scrap items listed below:

LOT#	Description of Unserviceable Item	Qty/Unit	Location	Min. Bid
1	Used Oil	79 drums	NPC/PGI - TIWI	P 16,290.00
2	Scrap/waste materials consist of 142 pcs. Used batteries, used pipes/fittings, tanks, electrical parts, junked vehicles/equipment approximately 650 metric tons	1 LOT	NPC/PGI - TIWI	2,009,260.00
3	Unserviceable materials & eqpt. consist of pipes, cables, fire extinguisher cylinders, used rockbits, junked vehicles, backhoe, hacksawing machine, drill press, air compressor, master pump, air dyer, etc.	1 LOT	NPC/PGI - TIWI	248,823.15
4	Scrap/junked matls./eqpt. composed of air/water compressors, dryers, welding machines forklift, backhoe, cutter, liner stabilizer, valves, cable wires, gas cylinders, radiators, package type aircons, fans, filing cabinets, etc. approximately 300 metric tons	1 LOT	WHSE 3 - TIWI	900,000.00
5	Assorted metal scraps, junked vehicles circular/radial saw, wireline spools and assorted junked hand tools approximately 410 metric tons	1 LOT	PGI - MAKBAN (Bul. 3A & Interface 5 & 6)	1,281,500.00
6	Retired stationary machines and equipment composed of centrifugal pumps, engines, compressor, generators, boom truck and Crane, FMC Linkbelt HTC-35	1 LOT	PGI - MAKBAN (Bulalo 3D)	1,239,103.68
7	Power Transformer, 50MVA "Fuji"	1 UNIT	MAKBAN - A	1,096,382.24

Bid in the prescribed form shall be enclosed in sealed envelopes and shall be received at SLR Bidding Room until 12:00 noon on December 13, 2002, after which bids shall be opened at 2:00 PM in the presence of attending bidders. Bids shall be accompanied by the following:

1.) Bidder's Bond in the form of Cash, Manager's Check equivalent to 5% of the total bid price.
2.) Latest Income Tax Return and/or Financial Statement of the Company.

Request for inspection and bid form may be obtained from GENCO 6 - PTWS Office, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna at P100.00 per set which is non-refundable. No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding. For inquiries, please call (02) 520-82-29.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waives formalities found therein and accept offers most advantageous to NPC.

R.C. CARDENO, JR.

(PDI--Nov. 30, 2002)

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People, Events & Products

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More jobs, quality service seen in 400 kHz frequency separation

AT PRESENT, FM radio stations in the Philippines are separated at a frequency of 800 kHz from one another (in Metro Manila, for example, FM radio stations broadcast at a frequency of MHz: 89.9, 90.7, 91.5,92.3...). But because of technological advancements in recent years, it is now possible for radio stations in the same area to broadcast without interference to one another at a frequency station of 400 kHz.

In the Philippines, a 400 kHz frequency separation in the FM broadcast industry will mean the birth of new radio stations, providing listeners with diversity in music and a more balanced flow of information and content than what is currently available on air. The public will no longer be forced to listen to the same kind of music being played by most of the FM radio stations today.

The advantages of adopting a 400 kHz frequency separation are not limited to providing the public with diversity in music. It will also provide for healthy competition between new and existing radio stations, allowing for better service and content. Right now, the FM broadcast industry is controlled by a handful of radio operators. The entry of a new breed of FM station operators will level the playing field. It will also open the doors for needed investments, more employment opportunities, influx of new technology and transfer of technical knowledge.

The fact that there is no technical barrier to a frequency separation of 400 kHz has been proven in other cities around the world. Among others are the cities in the U.S., U.K., Costa Rica, Guatemala and Singapore. In the Philippines, it has been proven by Media One Broadcasting Corporation when it conducted a government supervised propagation test broadcast last August. Media One transmitted at a frequency of 104.7 MHz (between 104.3 MHz and 105.1 MHz), clearly without interference to its neighboring stations. As a matter of fact, when Media One ceased broadcasting on Aug. 29, there was a clamor from the public (through email and texts) for 104.7 MHz to be put back on the air. This is because of the unique type of music they played, which catered to a segment of the public ignored before then, and the clear reception over which it was heard.

Last Oct. 7, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) took a progressive step and held a public hearing on the adoption of a 400 kHz frequency separation with the use of hybrid technology. "Hybrid technology" refers to the simultaneous transmission of compatible analog and digital audio signals, which means that a transmission can be received both by current analog receivers and by future digital receivers. It is therefore the effective transition to digital radio.

The primary consideration for any government regulation, including those issued by the NTC, is public interest, over and above that of the vested economic interests of a few entities. A frequency separation of 400 kHz obviously advances public interest. Of course, the birth and operation of new radio stations will be regulated by the NTC to safeguard the public's interests and ensure fair competition. Beyond any doubt, FM radio stations in the same area separated at a frequency of 400 kHz from one another is a win-win situation.

NESTLE YOGURT'S WINNING TEAM

The sterling growth of Nestle Yogurt earned the nod of the judges at the recent Agency of the Year Awards, meriting the Best in Market Performance Award for Ogilvy & Mather Philippines. The winning team (from left) include Anne Gonda, O&M account director; Bob Hekkelman, O&M group managing director; Katryna Mojica, O&M director for account management; Wenny Chan, Nestle group product manager; and Ian Donald, Nestle senior vice president and division manager – Ice Cream Division.

RCM-San Lorenzo's bazaar

THE ROTARY Club of Makati San Lorenzo is sponsoring a Christmas bazaar dubbed Pamaskong Tiangge 2002 as a fund-raising activity for its pilot project The Philippine Cerebral Palsy Foundation on Dec. 1 at the Ballroom of the Hotel Intercontinental. Pamaskong Tiangge 2002 will feature more than 100 concessionaires selling various Christmas items, white elephant sale, and raffle prizes.

AMERICAN EXPRESS LENDS A HAND IN "SAVE THE LA MESA DAM RESERVATION AREA PROJECT"

American Express has always been at the forefront of taking the lead in the preservation of the Philippines' culture and environment. It participated in the recently concluded "Save the La Mesa Dam Reservation Area Project" by adopting a one hectare land at the La Mesa Dam, consistent with American Express' continuing commitment to leave a legacy of clean air and water to the Filipino children. The La Mesa Watershed plays a vital role in providing many Filipino families with water and clean air. The continued support and commitment to its protection by individuals and organizations/companies like American Express would be significantly critical to the long-term viability of the damn to benefit future generations. Photo shows volunteers from American Express during the "Save the La Mesa Dam Reservation Area Project".

DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO
BOMB IDENTIFICATION & EXPLOSIVE RECOGNITION

DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO HOSTS BOMB IDENTIFICATION AND EXPLOSIVE RECOGNITION SEMINAR

Cognizant of the relevance and importance of safety and security specifically for its guests as for the general public, Dusit Hotel Nikko recently hosted a seminar on "Bomb Identification and Explosives Recognition", which was organized by the Kapisanan ng mga Broadkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) headed by Rey Langit and the Philippine Aviation Command Bomb Experts. The seminar, participated by Metro Manila reporters and a number of security personnel, aims to orient media particularly broadcasters on the materials used to create explosives and bombs as well as on how to deal with emergency cituations. Photo shows the speakers and panelists with KBP chairman Rey Langit (3rd from right).

CAFÉ LUPE CONTRACT SIGNING

Café Lupe, the newly opened Bar & Grill Restaurant located across the Guadalupe bridge fronting MRT station in Guadalupe Makati City, recently appointed Charims Inc. to handle events marketing, PR and publicity program of the place. Present during the signing of the contract (seated from left): Marose Rockwell, VP – finance and administration, Charisms Inc.; Billy Rockwell, president and CEO, Charisms Inc.; Alvin Carranza, president, Café Lupe; (standing from left) Naci Legaspi, art director, Charisms Inc.; Paz Reyes, operations manager, Café Lupe; and Maritess Gutierrez, executive chef, Café Lupe. This restaurant and bar is built beneath a towering Billboard structure, wherein industrial and Aztec inspired architecture creates a unique ambience. Café Lupe is the manifestation of the owner's sincere devotion to the Lady of Guadalupe. The restaurant offers a wide variety of dishes from Mexican, Filipino and Ilonggo foods. For reservations, call 899-2145, 896-3166 or fax 890-3199

O&M Snares Best in Market Performance Award

ONE of the questions always asked about creative advertising is, "Is it effective?" Ogilvy & Mather Philippines got that confirmation when the advertising campaigns it mounted for two of its clients, including Nestle Yogurt, helped boost sales to all-time highs.

Using learnings from Ogilvy's proprietary study on Asian food habits, the advertising campaign for Nestle Yogurt significantly built sales and brand awareness after only two months of airing and conservative media spending.

According to Katryna Mojica, O&M director for account management, the core idea was to break the inherent sense of sacrifice one perceived about yogurt via advertising that communicated surprise at how something so healthy could be so delicious.

The stellar performance of Nestle Yogurt earned a nod from the board of judges at the recent Agency of the Year Awards and Ogilvy & Mather Philippines walked off with the Best in Market Performance Award.

Ian Donald, Nestle senior vice president and division manager – Ice Cream Division, was elated with the win. "I feel as though O&M is part of our business. They are fully engaged with us and have taken ownership of our brands as though they were their own. They are a very professional group of people, and a great bunch of people to work and have fun with."

"This should once and for all, eliminate the misunderstanding that creative ads don't sell. At Ogilvy, we put the creative function at the top of our priorities. What clients want most from us are great campaigns with the spark to ignite sales. We are thankful that Nestle gave us the creative elbowroom to come up with our campaign," Bob Hekkelman, O&M Philippines group managing director said.

Ogilvy & Mather Philippines belongs to the top 10 agencies in the country and offers the full range of marketing communication disciplines including advertising, direct marketing, interactive consultancy, media planning and buying, database management, telemarketing, public relations, sales promotion, graphic design and events management disciplines. It is part of Ogilvy & Mather Asia-Pacific, the largest network in the region, and Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide, the eight largest global agency network.

DON BOSCO MANDALUYONG BATCH 1978 ALUMNI HOMECOMING

Event Date: January 25, 2003, 8 PM, Don Bosco Grounds. Seated from left: Mr. Dan Uson, vice president batch 1978; Dr. Zenon Udani, president batch 1978; Ms. Roda Yoyah Quizan, managing director, Crown 8 Concepts, Inc.; lawyer Benjamin Tanedo, lawyer for Don Bosco. Standing from left: Mr. Boyet Garcia, Mr. Alex Mano, officers for Don Bosco; Mr. Bodjie Rivera (not in picture)

BALBOA HISTORICAL MARKER

With the cooperation of Dole Secretary Pat Sto. Tomas, the historical marker of Fernanda Balboa, mother of Republic Act 2714 establishing the Bureau of Women and Minors at the Dole, the Metro Manila Council of Women Balikatan Movement installed the marker at the Dole main building in Intramuros, Manila. The marker was prepared by the National Historical Institute through chair Ambeth Ocampo and accounting director Mely Almosara. Photo shows, from left: Balikatan secretary Rexie Constantino, Julie Katindig, Balikatan treasurer Lita Carpio, National Council of Women of the Philippines representative Cora Sison; National Federation of Women's Clubs of the Philippines president Dr. Concordia S. Pascual, NHI accounting director Mely Almosara; Balikatan chairperson Leonarda Camacho; Balikatan vice-chairperson Ester Sta. Ana and Balikatan assistant secretary Tessie Preligera.

Product FILES

Fuss-free creamy seafood soups in less than five minutes

HERE'S a new treat for busy young professionals and modern-day moms. Seachamp Frozen Soups are the latest nutri-licious fare from Seachamp International, makers of the Polar line of quick and easy-to-prepare gourmet seafood.

The Seachamp Cream of Shrimp and Broccoli is made from real peeled shrimps with lots of broccoli chunks, while the Seachamp Clam Chowder Boston-Style contains real bits of clams. Both soups are thick and creamy. At the same time, it has low levels of fat and cholesterol.

Seachamp Frozen Soups are packed in 350-gram microwavable plastic bowls. Properly stored in your freezer, these can have a shelf life of up to six months. But the best thing is that you can just heat these in the microwave right in the container. In less that five minutes, you can have a bowl of hot, nutritious, all natural, thick seafood soup. It is a full meal in itself. You can rely on Seachamp's Frozen Soups, whether at home or at the office.

Check out the frozen section of a major supermarket near you for Seachamp Cream of Shrimp and Broccoli and Seachamp Clam Chowder Boston-Style. Seachamp products, including the Polar line, are distributed in retail outlets with freezers that can maintain strict temperature and quality standards as accredited by Seachamp. Among these are: Unimart, Makati Supermarket in Alabang, Cash and Carry, Landmark, and selected outlets of Rustan's, SM, Robinson's, Shopwise, Cherry and Puregold. For inquiries, you may call 831-6331, 833-1614.

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang** ◎ Assistant Editor **Stella O. Gonzales**

Lobbying for cheaper AIDS drugs

By **Tessa R. Salazar**

CHEAPER
AIDS DRUGS
PAFPI
DONATIONS
JED E.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

JOSHUA Formetera, 38, has been carrying the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) for 12 years now.

One of the founders of Positive Action Foundation Philippines Inc. (Pafpi), a nongovernment organization that helps HIV-positive persons and their families, Formetera is at the forefront of the campaign to reduce the cost of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, the last line of defense for persons with AIDS (PWAs).

Formetera has seen PWAs die without having taken ARV drugs because they are too expensive—$1,500 a month.

ARV drugs are not a cure for HIV/AIDS, but they can slowdown the progression of the disease.

Formetera said almost 99 percent of the 1,761 (as of September 2002) HIV-infected Filipinos could not afford to buy ARV drugs, and the government has yet no program to make these drugs affordable.

Access is essential

Formetera believes PWAs must be given access to cheap ARV medications.

He recently went to Europe to get donations for Pafpi and create a networking system with non-government organizations there. He collects "leftover" or surplus medication from foreign countries and brings them to the Philippines.

He was able to obtain free drugs for 15 Pafpi members, courtesy of Actione Treatmo, a Paris-based NGO.

Last May, Pafpi was able to get a generic ARV medication from India called Triomune, which costs only P1,500 a month. Each Triomune tablet is a potent combination of three drugs—Lamivudine, Stavudine and Nevirapine.

ARV medications can have serious side effects. A doctor's prescription and monitoring are important.

"Before taking ARV drugs, you have to have your liver, kidney and pancreas checked. The doctor recommends these medications only if your body is working well," Formetera said.

Adverse reaction to Triomune seemed minimal. Of the 15 PWAs taking Triomune, two developed rashes and have since been given another medicine, Indinivan 400, which is as cheap as Triomune. But it has to be taken in combination with two other drugs—Lamivudine and Stavudine. The cocktail costs about P2,000 a month.

Formetera said the medicines Pafpi buys are accepted by the World Health Organization. These medications have the same components as branded ones and have been tested.

Imported drugs

Formetera has been lobbying the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Health for the importation of cheap ARV medicines for PWAs in the Philippines. His effort paid off when the government agencies allowed Pafpi to buy these affordable medicines under certain conditions.

The government, which is very careful on the issue of parallel importation, stressed to NGOs like Pafpi that the drugs should only be for private use and for poor people who were referred to the NGOs. It stressed that the cheap drugs should be used for noncommercial purposes only.

Cash-strapped PWAs at the San Lazaro Hospital and the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine were referred to Pafpi, where they bought their prescriptions. Pafpi procures the P1,500-a-month medication but asks patients to order medicines good for three months.

Toto, a Pafpi member who has been HIV positive for 11 years, said his condition improved after taking Triomune a few months.

Once frail, Toto has regained enough strength to continue his work as an educator. He told the INQUIRER that he had to endure a lot of physical suffering since he acquired the virus. He had difficulty swallowing because of an HIV-related fungal infection called candidiasis. He had contracted tuberculosis, too.

Branded medicine

Formetera, on the other hand, can afford to take branded ARV drugs since he has his own business. If those medicines won't work, he said, he could always shift to Triomune.

He takes Dedanosine or Videx (which costs $200 a month), Ampenavir or Agenerase ($700 a month), and Epivir-Lamivudine ($200 a month).

"These are expensive but it's okay with me," he said. "It is cheaper to buy medicines than to be hospitalized. Hospitalization would incur a lot more expenses."

So far, he said, the medications he has been taking have done his health some good—his viral load is zero.

Dr. Roderick Poblete of the Philippine National Aids Foundation said people with HIV/AIDS face discrimination here and in other countries in terms of access to cheap ARV medication. On a global scale, there is an ongoing effort by the World Health Organization and UNAIDS to urge multinational drug companies to make these drugs more affordable.

One more time: the anthrax scare

(EDITOR'S note: The Philippine Department of Agriculture this week banned the importation of beef from Australia following the discovery of an anthrax-infected cow in a farm in Victoria state. The infected carcass was incinerated and the remaining cattle in the farm vaccinated. The entire property was quarantined. Still, Filipinos are worried if they could get infected with anthrax by eating beef. This article, from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will hopefully shed light on the matter.)

What is anthrax?

Anthrax is an acute infectious disease caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*. It commonly occurs in wild and domestic lower vertebrates (cattle, sheep, goat, camel, antelope and other herbivores), but it can also occur in humans when they are exposed to infected animals or tissue from infected animals.

Why has anthrax become a current issue?

Anthrax is considered to be a potential agent for use in biological warfare.

How common is anthrax and who can get it?

Anthrax is most common in agricultural regions where it occurs in animals. These include South and Central America, Southern and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the Middle East.

When anthrax affects humans, it is usually due to an occupational exposure to infected animals or their products. Workers exposed to dead animals and animal products from other countries where anthrax is more common may become infected with *B. anthracis* (industrial anthrax).

How is anthrax transmitted?

Anthrax infection can occur in three forms: cutaneous (skin), inhalation, and gastrointestinal.

B. anthracis spores can live in the soil for many years, and humans can become infected with anthrax by handling products from infected animals or by inhaling anthrax spores from contaminated animal products. Anthrax can also be spread by eating undercooked meat from infected animals.

What are the symptoms of anthrax?

Symptoms vary depending on how the disease was contracted, but they usually occur within seven days.

Cutaneous— Most anthrax infections occur when the bacterium enters a cut or abrasion on the skin, such as when handling contaminated wool, hides, leather or hair products of infected animals. Skin infection begins as a raised itchy bump that resembles an insect bite but within 1-2 days develops into a vesicle and then a painless ulcer, usually 1-3 cm in diameter, with a characteristic black necrotic area in the center. Lymph glands in the adjacent area may swell. About 20 percent of untreated cases of cutaneous anthrax will result in death.

Inhalation—Initial symptoms may resemble a common cold. After several days, the symptoms may progress to severe breathing problems and shock. Inhalation anthrax is usually fatal.

Intestinal—This form of anthrax may follow the consumption of contaminated meat and is characterized by an acute inflammation of the intestinal tract. Initial signs of nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting and fever are followed by abdominal pain, vomiting of blood, and severe diarrhea. Intestinal anthrax results in death in 25 to 60 percent of cases.

Can anthrax be spread from person-to-person?

Direct person-to-person spread of anthrax is extremely unlikely to occur.

Is there a treatment for anthrax?

Doctors can prescribe effective antibiotics. To be effective, treatment should be initiated early. If left untreated, the disease can be fatal.

Is there a way to prevent infection?

In countries where anthrax is common and vaccination levels of animal herds are low, humans should avoid contact with livestock and animal products and avoid eating meat that has not been properly slaughtered and cooked. Also, an anthrax vaccine has been licensed for use in humans. The vaccine is reported to be 93 percent effective in protecting against anthrax.

What is the anthrax vaccine?

It is a cell-free filtrate vaccine, which means it contains no dead or live bacteria in its preparation. Anthrax vaccines that are intended for animals should not be used in humans.

Who should get vaccinated against anthrax?

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recommended anthrax vaccination for the following groups:

- People who work directly with the organism in the laboratory.
- People who work with imported animal hides or furs in areas where standards are insufficient to prevent exposure to anthrax spores.
- People who handle potentially infected animal products in high-incidence areas.
- Military personnel deployed to areas with a high risk for exposure to the organism, such as when it is used as a biological warfare weapon.

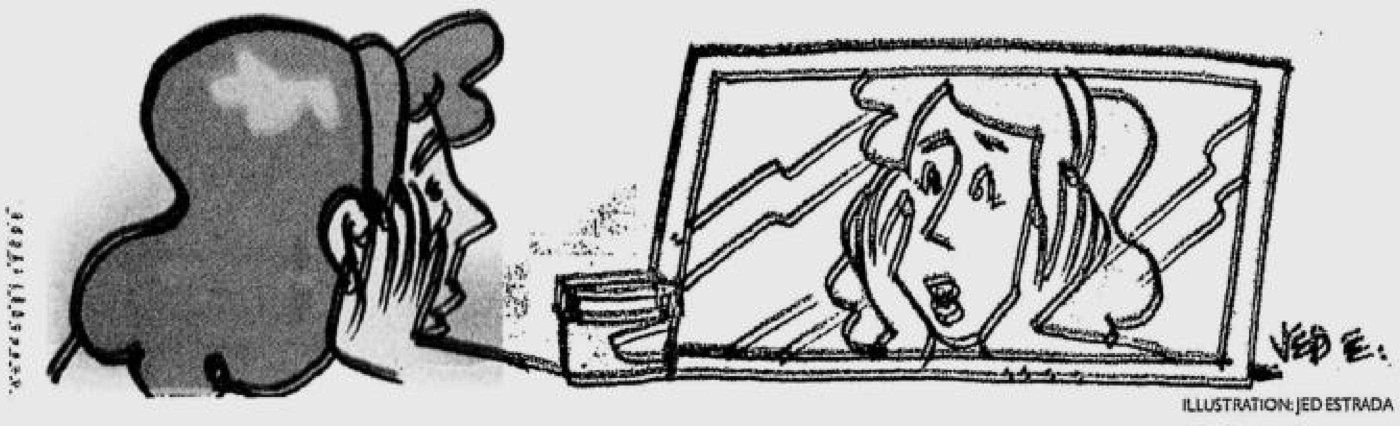

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Med journal warns vs botox effects

PARIS—A prestigious medical journal has issued a warning over the use of botox, the anti-wrinkle treatment that is spreading like wildfire among celebrities and the well-heeled.

Botox—botulinum toxin, derived from the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*—is a viciously powerful neurotoxin that at high doses can cause fatal paralysis.

At low doses, it is licensed for use to treat neurological conditions such as facial tics and muscular spasms in the neck, back, fingers and wrists.

But it is starting to move out of the clinic and into unlicensed areas, driven by a frenzied demand by men and women who want to look younger. By paralyzing muscles that cause wrinkles in the forehead, it can smooth out age and worry lines.

In an editorial earlier this month, the British Medical Journal, the weekly organ of the British Medical Association, sternly warns that many aspects of botox's long-term impact on health have never been explored, especially on the nervous system.

"Robust evidence for the action of botulinum toxin on sensory neurons is lacking," according to the editorial, written by Peter Misra, a consultant at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London.

"Animal experiments have shown that botulinum toxin affects the transmission of afferent nerves," he said, referring to nerves that relay signals from the limbs to the central nervous system.

Studies in rats have shown that botox can block the release of nerve-signal chemicals called neurotransmitters, he said.

"It is easy to forget that botulinum toxin is a potent neurotoxin and that its very long-term effects are still unknown," he warned.

Botox treatment is not permanent—follow-up injections are needed a few months afterward—and those who receive it sometimes complain that their faces look frozen and unexpressive. *AFP*

Needs and wants: researching other needs

DISCOVER

Massie K. Santos

(Conclusion)

LAST week I talked about the studies involving memory skills and mommy rats, and gay and straight sheep.

This week I'd like to give my own thoughts on these studies and give some sense of closure on the extremely complex topic of animal research—which a three-part column is not going to completely explain to everyone, nor fully satisfy all who feel strongly on either side of the debate on the use of animals in scientific research.

As I mentioned before, Craig Kinsley and his team are trying to find a relationship between motherhood and the brain. They argue that hormones wash over the brain during pregnancy, causing subtle changes in memory and behavior (for example, a woman who thinks solely of herself suddenly finds herself willing to do anything for her child once she becomes a mother).

This is based on a two-year study of rats with no litter (zero), one litter and two litters. By the time the tests were done the rats' ages were approximately equivalent to that of a 70-year-old human female. This led to their theory that motherhood keeps the brain so active it prevents senility and diseases like Alzheimer's.

While I buy the idea that pregnancy causes a woman to become maternal (unless the maternal genes I discussed in a previous article aren't kicking in) and infinitely wise (it makes her glow too, doesn't it?), I don't think the conclusion was equally logical.

Stretching things a bit

To suggest that hormones, during pregnancy, wash over the brain and cause mothers to use more of their brains than most people do, thus gaining ESP-like abilities, is plausible. How many people have commented on their own mother's uncanny ability to know things about them that they haven't even said aloud to anyone?

But to say that motherhood may make people less likely to get Alzheimer's is, I think, a stretch. I would argue that it's harder to prove that there are more old maids out there who have to deal with declining brain functions than aging mothers because the latter will actually have people—their children—checking up on them on a more regular basis.

In short then, the rat study may not exactly contribute toward saving human lives, but it will make a great contribution toward improving the quality of human life. That would explain why this study has been approved.

Beheading gay sheep

And then there's the gay sheep study. There are probably readers out there who were horrified at the idea that these sheep have been needlessly beheaded, because, at first glance, finding a difference between the brains of gay and straight sheep doesn't have anything to do with saving human lives.

But in a sense it does. By gaining a better understanding of the hows and whys of homosexual tendencies—if it can be attributed to genetics, the environment or both or neither—perhaps there will be more tolerance and acceptance of homosexuals (and even transgenders, transsexuals and transvestites) in society.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

No more needless murders caused by people enraged at being deceived by someone's seemingly obvious gender and sexual orientation, such as the death of the woman that inspired the movie "Boys Don't Cry" or the play about the life of college student Matthew Shepard.

If even one human life has been saved due to human acceptance as a result of this study and others like it, then the use of animals in the research is justified.

Metal cockroaches

I admit though that I don't have a good explanation yet for the cockroaches. Can any research justify the creation of a metal cockroach about a foot long that can keep its balance on any terrain?

Well, such a robot could be used to explore areas such as volcanoes or planets like Mars, which are too rough or dangerous for humans or animals to travel on. Then again, maybe the jet packs were a way of killing cockroaches without filling the air with noxious insecticide fumes.

I'll admit, that last line was cold and totally callous. My apologies to roaches everywhere.

It may have been clear from the beginning to some that none of the studies discussed here were absolutely necessary to save human lives. But, hopefully, this discussion will also point out that while many studies involving animals are done because the research will help save human lives, there are a lot of factors to consider when these studies are first proposed, not just the single criterion we've been looking at all this time.

And perhaps this will explain why these studies, and others like them, have been approved in the first place, although they may necessarily lead to longer lives for some people.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

New drug treats gastrointestinal disorder

By Charles E. Buban

STARTING January a new drug called tegaserod which treats symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) will be available in the country.

Results of a 13-country study on the drug, to be marketed here as Zelnorm, affirmed the earlier results of a North American study showing the drug's effectiveness in curing wide-ranging ailments caused by IBS.

Until now, patients could only use laxatives, but they didn't relieve the cause of IBS. Zelnorm goes a step further by acting on nerve cells to speed up the colon's movement of stools.

"These findings are very encouraging," said W. Grant Thompson of the University of Ottawa in Canada who was recently in Manila to talk about the treatment of IBS.

"Although IBS is not life-threatening, patients who have this ailment have a higher rate of hospitalization, work absenteeism, poor quality of life and abdominal surgeries than patients with other gastrointestinal illnesses," he said.

IBS affects approximately 10-20 percent of the population, according to Novartis, the manufacturer of Zelnorm.

It is the most common ailment diagnosed by gastroenterologists and one of the most common disorders seen by all physicians. IBS is not a disease but a functional disorder.

Its main symptoms are crampy pain in the abdomen and painful diarrhea or constipation, or both. Other symptoms are mucus in the stool, swollen or bloated abdomen, and the feeling that you have not finished a bowel movement.

"The lack of a satisfactory treatment for IBS has been frustrating for doctors, and distressing for the many patients who have to live with this debilitating illness," said Thompson.

Zelnorm belongs to a new chemical class of compounds which selectively target and act on 5-HT4 receptors present in the gastrointestinal tract. These receptors may potentially play a key role in pain perception and gastrointestinal motility.

By acting on the 5-HT4 receptor pathway, Zelnorm may reduce abdominal pain and normalize altered gastrointestinal function in IBS patients.

US researcher finds way to slow down aging process

"THE OVERALL deterioration of the body that comes with growing old is not inevitable. We now realize that some aspects of it (aging) can be prevented or reversed." This was culled from the New England Journal of Medicine.

DR. Howard

Contrary to what Juan Ponce de Leon thought when he searched for it in the 16th century, the fountain of youth as science has discovered lies in the brain's pituitary gland, and it's a lot easier to find than what the famed explorer thought.

In 1990, in a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, researchers led by Dr. Daniel Rudman found that increasing the amounts of human Growth Hormone (GH) slowdown part of the aging process.

Since then, the United States Food and Drug Administration has approved the use of synthetic growth hormone therapy administered locally through injection. Although the approach has been found to counteract declining hormone levels and reduce aging symptoms greatly by 10-20 years, side effects were noted, including decreased production of GH by the pituitary due to glandular atrophy (the shrinking in size of the gland).

Formulation

With these findings, two US scientists—Doctors Steve Haltiwanger and David Howard—formulated a natural growth hormone enhancement supplement containing natural peptides that safely increases GH release and cell receptor absorption without altering the body's natural production of GH.

Launched recently, the Natropin Rejuvenation Program is a breakthrough formulation said to have the potential to play the most important role in anti-aging and performance enhancement that the world has not yet seen.

"Our most significant finding in 20 years of research was that increasing the levels of GH via this science-based nutraceutical supplementation is the safest and most effective way to reverse the aging process," said Dr. Howard, an anti-aging research scientist. "Not only is it safe, but it's cost effective as well."

During a recent press preview led by the two American scientists, guests were able to see firsthand and understand the anti-aging benefits and advantage of taking Natropin.

Regular exercise or a diet including plenty of antioxidants such as Vitamin E, Vitamin C and beta carotene, all of which fight the tendency of oxygen to slowly break down muscle mass, also help protect against the type of tissue and muscle loss that occur as individuals grow older, Howard said.

"The use of GH enhancement together with a mild exercise program greatly enhances its anti-aging benefits," said Dr. Haltiwanger. "The combined effect also increased natural growth hormone production, which was interesting."

Study findings

The study presented the following results: Restored muscle mass, decreased body fat, reduced wrinkles, restored loss and color, increased energy and vitality, increased sexual function, improved vision, increased cardiac output, normalized blood pressure and a lot more.

Said Dr. Howard: "To date, with the exception of the traditional way of injections, I have heard no complaints from test subjects and consumers using the Natropin Rejuvenation Program. Our formulation, using an oral and topical application, produces truly amazing results. The average age reversal can go by as much as 10-20 years. At 57, I look and feel like a healthy 35.

The Natropin Rejuvenation Program is available locally through its exclusive distributor, Beauty Exponents Inc.

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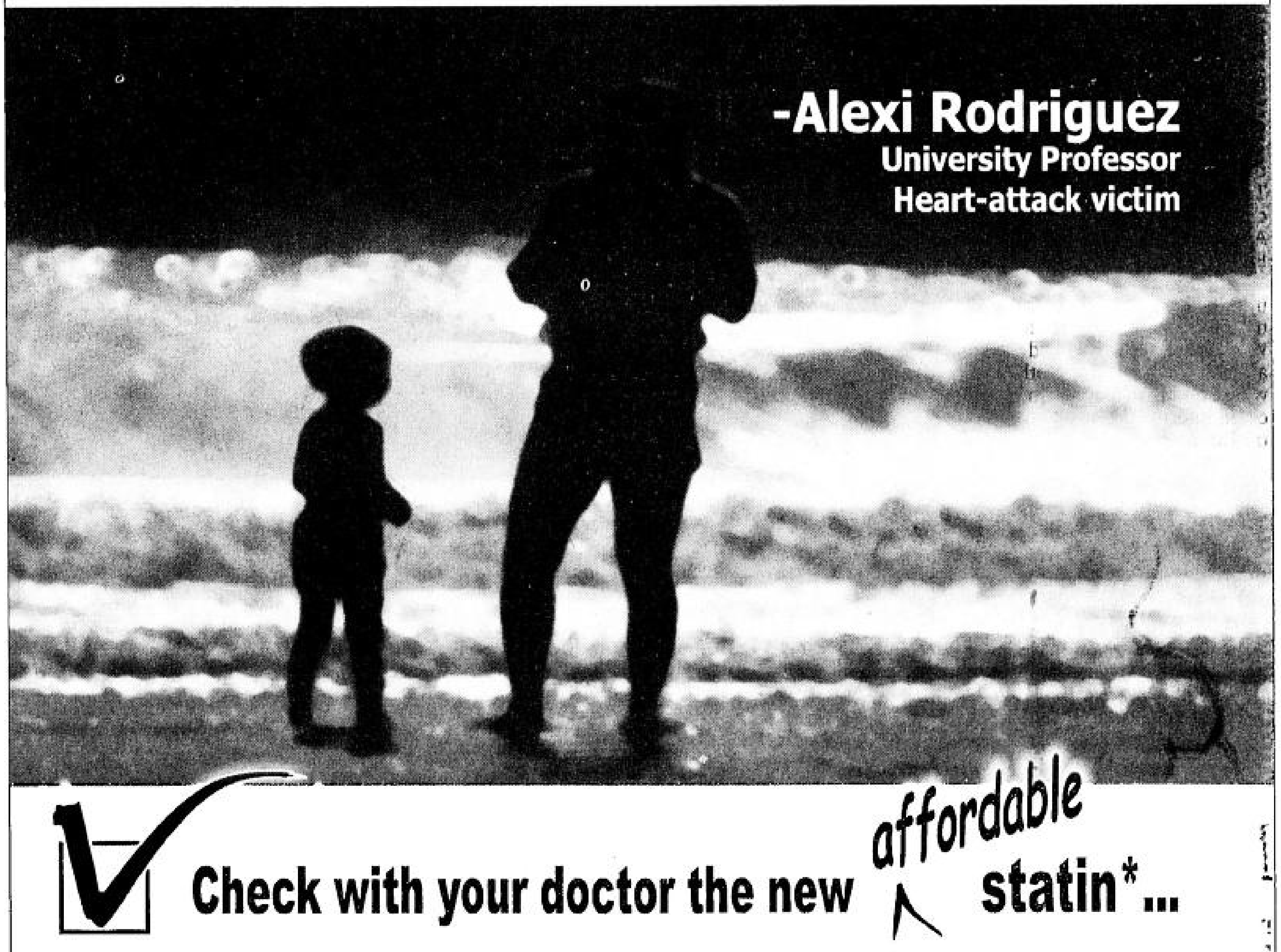

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Recent landmark trials have shown the beneficial effects of the cholesterol-lowering drug known as statins.[1]
Statins help prolong lives, lower heart-related deaths, prevent heart attacks and strokes...
only IF they are taken for at least 3 years, religiously.[2]
COST of statins though is a big barrier to compliance.

REFERENCES:
[1] Kjekshus et al. Reducing the risk of Coronary Events: Evidence from the Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study (4S) Am J Cardiol 1995; 76:64C-68C.
[2] Heart Protection Study Collaborative Group MRC/BHF Heart Protection Study of cholesterol lowering with simvastatin in 20,536 high-risk individuals: a randomized placebo controlled trial. The Lancet 2002 July; 360 (9236): 7-22.

A public health service announcement from theraphorma
Your partner in cardiovascular healthcare.

* This class of drug is approved for sale by BFAD as a prescription drug and should be bought only with a prescription.

Parent's smoke injures children's blood vessels

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

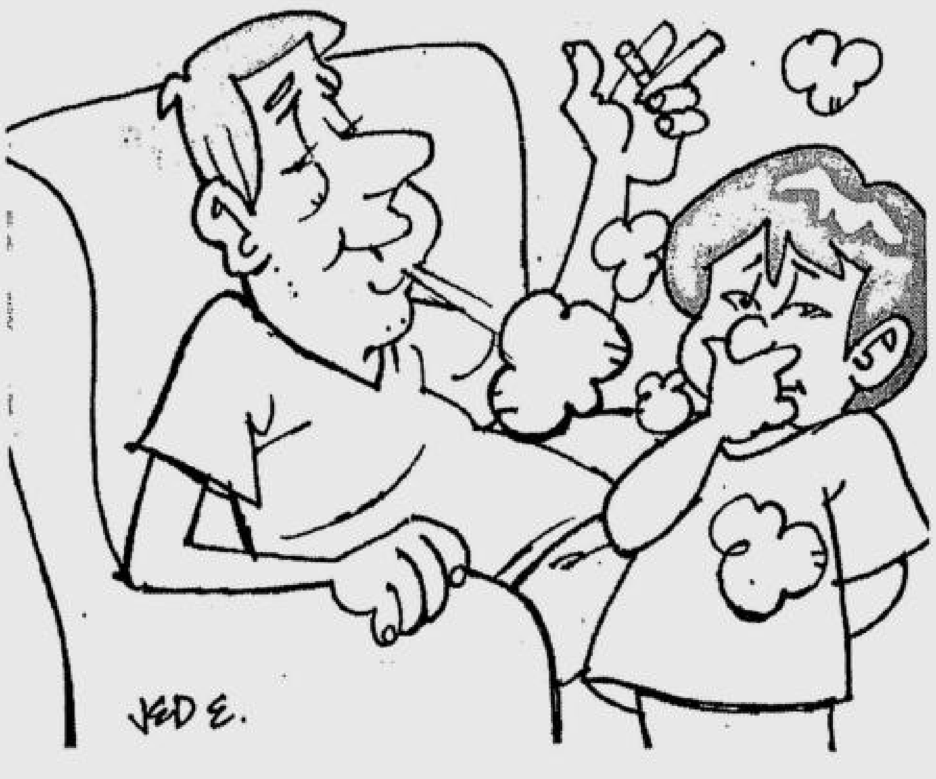

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

CHICAGO, Illinois—Parents who smoke are doing their children a lot of harm without their realizing it. Secondhand smoke injures the blood vessels of their children, making the latter more prone to developing atherosclerosis, or narrowing of the arteries, which may make them susceptible to premature heart attacks and strokes later in life.

Children with one parent who smoked in their presence had up to 50 percent higher levels of a biological marker for oxidative stress in their blood, according to a paper presented at the American Heart Association convention here.

Oxidative stress is believed to be the main cause for endothelial dysfunction which is the initial stage for atherosclerosis. The endothelium is the inner lining of the blood vessels consisting of a thin layer of cells that helps the blood vessels dilate and contract. If these cells are damaged, the blood vessels become "stiff" and less able to handle the body's changing blood flow needs. Blood circulation is significantly impaired.

Secondhand smoke has been shown to break down antioxidant defenses, leading to a weakening of the blood vessel's capacity to dilate when circulation requires it. This accelerates endothelial dysfunction.

Oxidative stress

Prof. Helmut Sinzinger of the University of Vienna in Austria explains that free radicals, which are unstable molecules produced during a process called oxidation, can damage cells in the body—a process called oxidative stress. It is significantly higher in children exposed to secondhand smoke.

To assess the degree of oxidative stress, Sinzinger and his group measured the levels of a biological compound called PGF2alpha in the blood and urine of 158 children aged 3 to 15. There is a high level of the substance when free radicals block substances in the body which allow normal function of the blood vessels—such as dilation, blood clot prevention and prevention of inflammation reaction.

"(PGF2alpha) is a very potent blood vessel constrictor and may help create blood vessel spasm and set the stage for blood clot formation," says Sinzinger.

Children were grouped according to the smoking levels of their parents—whether both parents smoked at home or not—and according to the number of cigarettes their parents smoked each day. A group who had nonsmoking parents was used as the control with which the PGF2alpha levels were compared.

Harmful substance

Results showed a significant elevation of the harmful substance in the blood and urine of children whose parents smoked in their presence. Sinzinger reported that even if the child was exposed to secondhand smoke from less than 20 cigarettes per day by one smoking parent, there was a 35 to 50 percent elevation in PGF2alpha levels in the blood and 20 to 30 percent in the urine.

The researchers found out that if both parents smoked more than 40 cigarettes a day, the PGF2alpha levels in the blood were 130 percent higher and 65 percent higher in the urine than that in the control group.

It was also noted that smoking by the mother had a significantly more pronounced effect. This is understandable since mothers usually have closer contact with their children and spend more time with them at home.

Sinzinger says that although it is difficult to speculate on the long-term consequence on children, it is highly recommended that parents do not smoke inside the house or whenever their children are near them.

"The best way is for parents to quit smoking altogether," says one of the researchers

"Our findings could be of great importance," says Sinzinger. He adds that blood vessel disease may be triggered early in childhood by exposure to secondhand smoke.

"It is well known that atherosclerotic lesions on the blood vessels are strongly correlated to risk factors that include smoking," says Dr. Dante Morales, president of the Philippine Lipid Society and one of the Filipino delegates to the convention.

"It is alarming that parents who smoke are increasing in number even in developing or underdeveloped countries like the Philippines, and these parents are seemingly unmindful of the consequence of their smoking on their children's health. This may be a serious health issue that has to be properly addressed," adds Morales.

Short-term exposure

Another study, conducted by Dr. Toru Kato and his co-researchers at the Saitama Medical Center in Japan, showed the deleterious effects of short-term exposure to secondhand smoke in young, healthy nonsmokers. There was an increase in the production of free radicals which causes injury to the blood vessels.

The study also measured blood levels of PGF2alpha in nonsmoking young men with no history of cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure or diabetes after a 30-minute exposure to cigarette smoke. An ultrasound was done to assess flow-mediated dilation (FMD), which measures changes in the amount of blood flow.

The researchers found out that the nonsmoking young men's PGF2alpha levels significantly increased with a reduction in their FMD.

"These findings may add relevance to the idea that everyone should be protected from even short-term exposure to secondhand smoke," says Kato.

Morales notes that this can be a problem to nonsmokers who frequent clubs and other establishments that allow customers to smoke freely. Employees in offices that allow smoking may also be exposed to a similar risk.

"If smokers can't quit, the least they can do is to stop themselves from harming others," Morales said.

Renal disease 10th leading cause of death

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

ILLNESSES related to the kidney are now the 10th leading cause of mortality, or death, in the country. This was recently reported by kidney disease specialists during a press conference held in line with the 14th Asian Colloquium in Nephrology and the 22nd annual convention of the Philippine Society of Nephrology at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

Statistics from the National Kidney and Transplant Institute show 4,500 emergency room and 19,000 outpatient consultations and 8,800 admissions of patients with kidney problems last year.

And one of the leading causes of kidney disease is diabetes, of which four percent of Filipinos are affected. According to Dr. Benita Padilla, a board member of the Philippine Society of Nephrology, 3.1 million, or four percent of Filipinos, have diabetes and 10-20 percent of these diabetics will eventually develop diabetic nephropathy with about half million developing kidney disease. Dr. Padilla, together with Dr. Romina Danguilan, is spearheading the Kidney Biopsy and Renal Disease Registry Projects.

Dr. Danguilan, who discussed end-stage renal disease where there is a need to replace kidney function through dialysis or kidney transplant, reported that from 4,363 new patients who needed dialysis last year, 9,760 (122 per one million population) new patients with end-stage renal disease are projected to be added this year. Of these patients, only 46 percent, or 4,490, can afford dialysis with 97 percent getting inadequate treatment (less than three times a week of dialysis). The other 54 percent, or 5,279 patients, are unable to get any treatment because of financial constraints and will die in six months. Medical insurance, including Philhealth coverage of dialysis is insufficient to enable patients to get the required number of treatments.

Present during the press conference were Drs. Libertad P. Nazareno-Rosalez, Lyn Almazan Gomez, president and secretary of PSN, respectively, and some foreign delegates to the convention. B. Braun, a leading name in global health-care industry supported the meeting.

Power herbs for men now available

WITH THE PUBLICITY about the impotence-fighting abilities of prescription virility drugs , let us take a look at some key natural supplements, herbs in particular, for men.

The "self-help" movement, along with increased awareness about natural medicine, and an appreciation for the effects of lifestyle on health and well-being have resulted in a greater consciousness regarding issues about men's health.

Let's take a closer look at men's health problems and the herbs that could help solve them. Botanical medicines have much to offer men. Herbs can be used for prevention, disease treatment and supplement. Exciting research all over the world demonstrates a positive and unique role for plant medicine in men's health.

Fortunately, nature has given us the most powerful herbs in the universe since the time of Sung Dynasty. An aphrodisiac was formulated for Emperor Kao Tsung (1126-1279 A.D.), who was known to have practiced concubinage. Since then, the Chinese began to use this concoction as a natural sex enhancer.

Based on thorough study and clinical research by Lee MF's Rhino Brand, they adopted the Herbal Tea, specifically for men in order to solve the problem of male corporeal dilemma and lesser stamina. It contains nature's herbs that revitalizes and heightens male performance.

Like the rising and the setting of the sun, your body follows its own complex series of cycles that takes you from day to night and night to day. It only makes sense to nourish your body with elements that support these cycles. Lee MF Rhino Brand Herbal Tea starts your day by fueling and fortifying you with energy packed herbs and enzymes. Life can feel good again.

Put your faith in nature and your trust in power herbs. Lee MF Rhino Brand is clinically proven to be effective and safe for repeated use. It is recommended that you drink one cup 15 minutes before sexual activity.

ASK THE DENTIST

Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Appearance of baby teeth

I HAVE a beautiful newborn baby boy! I am so excited for him to get his teeth. When will his first teeth come anyway?

—Mida D.

Your baby's teeth will come out when he is between 6 and 14 months. These could be the two upper or two lower teeth at the center. Some children get their teeth early while some get them late. There is no medical importance attached to the timing of the eruption of the teeth.

Usually girls mature earlier than boys and so their teeth could come earlier. If you are excited now, you'll be doubly happy when the day comes when your baby boy will be smiling back at you with his pearly whites.

(The author, a graduate of the UP College of Dentistry, is a general and cosmetic dentist licensed here and in the US. Your questions are welcome at dentalqs@yahoo.com.)

Most beautiful experiments in science

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

(First of two parts)

NEXT to mathematics, my love is physics. I recall poring over special relativity light paradoxes at the ripe old age of 10, and enshrining Einstein as one of my childhood heroes (together with Tolkien and Larry Bird). Physics experiments fascinated me, and although I never blew up the playroom with chemical gizmos (as Edison reportedly did), I tried my best to fiddle around with broken radios and Voltes V toy robots. Yes, I love the austere logic of high math, but sometimes I long for the empirical certainty of experiments.

What make experiments beautiful? The expense involved? (Think of giant particle accelerators.)The computers utilized? (Think of the Human Genome Project.)No. It turns out that math is right for me after all, since most scientists believe that what is beautiful in physical experiment is also what is beautiful in math—simple, logical, flawless conclusions from simple, inexpensive apparatus.

Philosophy professor Robert Crease of the State University of New York at Stony Brook (also a historian at Brookhaven National Laboratory) asked scientists to list the most beautiful experiments. The top 10, published in the September 2002 issue of Physics World, were summarized by George Johnson in the Sept. 24 issue of the New York Times, from where the following information is quoted. (I acknowledge my colleague Dr. Cathy Vistro-Yu for forwarding the article.)

1. Young's double-slit experiment applied to the interference of single electrons

"Neither Newton nor Young was quite right about the nature of light. Though it is not simply made of particles, neither can it be described purely as a wave. In the first five years of the 20th century, Max Planck and then Albert Einstein showed, respectively, that light is emitted and absorbed in packets called photons. But other experiments continued to verify that light is also wavelike.

Wavicles

"It took quantum theory, developed over the next few decades, to reconcile how both ideas could be true: photons and other subatomic particles—electrons, protons and so forth—exhibit two complementary qualities; they are, as one physicist put it, 'wavicles.'

"To explain the idea, to others and to themselves, physicists often used a thought experiment, in which Young's double-slit demonstration is repeated with a beam of electrons instead of light. Obeying the laws of quantum mechanics, the stream of particles would split into two, and the smaller streams would interfere with each other, leaving the same kind of light—and dark-striped pattern as was cast by light. Particles would act like waves.

"According to an accompanying article in Physics World by the magazine's editor, Peter Rodgers, it wasn't until 1961 that someone (Claus Jönsson of Tübingen) carried out the experiment in the real world. By that time no one was really surprised by the outcome, and the report, like most, was absorbed anonymously into science."

2. Galileo's experiment on falling objects

"In the late 1500s, everyone knew that heavy objects fall faster than lighter ones. After all, Aristotle had said so. That an ancient Greek scholar still held such sway was a sign of how far science had declined during the dark ages.

Challenging Aristotle

"Galileo Galilei, who held a chair in mathematics at the University of Pisa, was impudent enough to question the common knowledge. The story has become part of the folklore of science: he is reputed to have dropped two different weights from the town's Leaning Tower showing that they landed at the same time. His challenges to Aristotle may have cost Galileo his job, but he had demonstrated the importance of taking nature, not human authority, as the final arbiter in matters of science."

3. Millikan's oil-drop experiment

"Since ancient times, scientists had studied electricity—an intangible essence that came from the sky as lightning or could be produced simply by running a brush through your hair. In 1897 (in an experiment that could easily have made this list) the British physicist J. J. Thomson had established that electricity consisted of negatively charged particles—electrons. It was left to the American scientist Robert Millikan, in 1909, to measure their charge.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

"Using a perfume atomizer, he sprayed tiny drops of oil into a transparent chamber. At the top and bottom were metal plates hooked to a battery, making one positive and the other negative. Since each droplet picked up a slight charge of static electricity as it traveled through the air, the speed of its descent could be controlled by altering the voltage on the plates. (When this electrical force matched the force of gravity, a droplet—'like a brilliant star on a black background'—would hover in midair.)

Fixed values

"Millikan observed one drop after another, varying the voltage and noting the effect. After many repetitions he concluded that charge could only assume certain fixed values. The smallest of these portions was none other than the charge of a single electron."

4. Newton's decomposition of sunlight with a prism

"Isaac Newton was born the year Galileo died. He graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1665, then holed up at home for a couple of years waiting out the plague. He had no trouble keeping himself occupied.

"The common wisdom held that white light is the purest form (Aristotle again) and that colored light must therefore have been altered somehow. To test this hypothesis, Newton shone a beam of sunlight through a glass prism and showed that it decomposed into a spectrum cast on the wall. People already knew about rainbows, of course, but they were considered to be little more than pretty aberrations. Actually, Newton concluded, it was these colors—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet and the gradations in between—that were fundamental. What seemed simple on the surface, a beam of white light, was, if one looked deeper, beautifully complex."

5. Young's light-interference experiment

"Newton wasn't always right. Through various arguments, he had moved the scientific mainstream toward the conviction that light consists exclusively of particles rather than waves.

Putting to test

In 1803, Thomas Young, an English physician and physicist, put the idea to a test. He cut a hole in a window shutter, covered it with a thick piece of paper punctured with a tiny pinhole and used a mirror to divert the thin beam that came shining through. Then he took 'a slip of a card, about one-thirtieth of an inch in breadth' and held it edgewise in the path of the beam, dividing it into two. The result was a shadow of alternating light and dark bands—a phenomenon that could be explained if the two beams were interacting like waves.

"Bright bands appeared where two crests overlapped, reinforcing each other; dark bands marked where a crest lined up with a trough, neutralizing each other. The demonstration was often repeated over the years using a card with two holes to divide the beam. These so-called double-slit experiments became the standard for determining wavelike motion—a fact that was to become especially important a century later when quantum theory began.

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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor

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Kodak Professional – 'Growth Thru Digitization'

IT WAS indeed another successful gathering of the Professional Photography industry last Sept. 19 when the "Kodak ProCard Network Program," initiated by Kodak Professional–a business unit of Eastman Kodak Company, held the third in a series of seminars dubbed as "Growth Thru Digitization," at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel.

The seminar started with a welcome speech by Diana Pilapil, product and channel manager, Kodak Professional. She says, "This is the right time for digital because the consumer is ready for change and that the technology is just about there. Our strategies to drive growth for Kodak Professional and the entire portrait industry are based on our confidence that digitization will fundamentally change the market for portraits. Step 1 is for the industry to build an infrastructure to support digitization. The first phase is Streamlining Workflows for labs and some of the industry's leading studios. Industry leaders are now increasing their profitability by operating more efficiently in many markets." "But the big multiplier effect everyone's anticipating will come from new uses for portraits and the ability to reach new users of portraits–all enabled by digital technology," Pilapil added.

William Lee, digitization manager from Kodak Malaysia, discussed about the Kodak Professional Modular Digital Workflow. He points out that "It's not about whether to go digital but how to go digital. To stay responsive, competitive and positioned for growth, you must add digital imaging technology to your workflow."

"A modular workflow features high-performance components linked in a powerful, flexible system, one that's built for your needs today but still scalable–at every stage of your workflow–to grow with your business tomorrow. And it is supported by software that coordinates all aspects of your imaging needs: from image integrity and manipulation to order processing and billing. Kodak Professional Modular Digital Workflow gives you the power you need, along with the peace of mind that comes from using trusted, co-optimized components," Lee further added.

Ace lensman, Francis Edward Abraham, owner of a Kodak DCS 760 and Kodak Proback 645, talked about this expertise on digital photography. He admits, "My business has never been the same when digital imaging technology came into the picture." He says he can do his work now more effectively and productively and that his customers keep coming back because they are very happy and satisfied with his work.

"With digital technology available and maximized in imaging laboratories and photo studios, we can now assure our clients that with digital everything is possible and is not far from reality," Dr. Joel Estrada, president of ImageSetters Mgt. Inc., pointed out. "Editing pictures, which used to be difficult before, is just a mouse-click away nowadays," Dr. Estrada noted.

Both agreed that going digital depends on the demand of the business and consumers. And the industry should maximize outputs with each digital imaging equipment.

Kodak Professional has demonstrated its commitment to digitization by developing the industry's most comprehensive digital systems. Our systems include equipment, media and software for capture, management, and output of images. Kodak Professional is the only solution provider, which integrates optical and digital that helps ensure profitability as one goes through the transition. It has the integrated production tool capable to manage the entire digital and digital/hybrid imaging chain and opens the door to a variety of new, creative and unique products.

The Kodak ProCard Network Program not only provides photographers with free trainings and seminars organized by Kodak Professional, but also relevant product news and updates, participation in special promotions/contests and premium item rewards promo, product trial privileges, value added sales promotion, marketing alliances and many more!

Good news to all ProCard members! Avail of the following discount packages from Kodak Professional Partner Labs when you present your ProCard.

ImageSetters Mgt., Inc. (851-1213)–20% discount on 8R and larger prints from digital files and 30% discount on hourly rates for computer-based digital enhancement, manipulation, layout, restoration services.

Island Photo–Don Jacinto Makati Branch (840-5699) and Fans Digital Inc. (722-6878) will also be giving 20% discount on 8R and larger print services.

You may also visit Studio58 (812-1868) and Kameraworld (631-6164) for your film and digital requirements.

In July, Kodak Professional held a seminar on wedding photography, which was facilitated by Patrick Uy. The Kodak ProCard Network Program was launched in June with a seminar focused on portraiture training by Pancho Escaler.

Joining the Kodak ProCard Nerwork Program is absolutely free! And for those who have not claimed their membership cards, please claim your membership cards to avail the many benefits and privileges Kodak Professional has in store for you. For more information on how to join or claim you membership cards, you may call Grace Monteiro at 772-2890, 543-7947 or email at nouveau@surfshop.net.ph.

OUR GIFT: A CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The Technological Institute of the Philippines Choral Society (TIPCS) had its free pre-Christmas concert 'Our Gift' Nov. 28 and 29 at the TIP Quezon City Campus. The concert featured traditional Christmas carols and works by L. San Pedro, R. Cayabyab, M. Ortiz and E. Palaruan. The TIP Choral Society shall also perform at the SM Centerpoint on Dec. 17 and 18 and at the Podium on Dec. 22. The choir sings in the 5:30 p.m. mass at the Our Lady of Edsa Shrine every first and third Thursday of the month. The TIPCS is conducted by Oneill Torres, an alumnus of the world-renowned Ateneo Glee Club.

Sore throat free performa !
MUSIC TELEVISION

THE CLEAR SOUND OF CHRISTMAS

Hexetidine Bactidol and MTV Philippines signed into agreement the promotion of the 3-weekend mall Christmas concert 'The Clear Sound of Christmas'. This musical showcase is Bactidol's Sore-Throat-Free Christmas concert featuring performances by South Border, Dessa, Kyla, and 17:28. The first performance schedule is today, Nov. 30, 5:30 p.m. at the SM Megamall Megastrip. Shown, from left, standing, are Rod Nepomuceno, marketing and communications director of MTV Philippines, Francis Lumen, managing director of MTV Philippines, Jocelyn Conti, marketing manager of Hexetidine Bactidol, and Tin Tin Gokiao from Mindshare. Seated, from left, are Bong Paderna, group account director of MTV Philippines, Kathy Alejar, account executive of MTV Philippines, Kristina Cabanez, product manager of Hexetidine Bactidol, and Gretchen Borja, senior product manager of Listerine.

'DA BOY' GRACES TIMEZONE OPENING

Timezone, the biggest name in entertainment and amusement, has finally opened its 11th branch, this time at SM Megamall. Present were the country's celebrity Timezone fanatics that included basketball superstar Vince Hizon, sportscaster Anthony Suntay, master rapper Francis Magalona with wife Pia and kids, Elmo, Arkin and Clara, young stars Dennis Trillo and MTB's Maoui David, and the action king himself Rudy Fernandez. Next on Timezone's agenda is the visit of the La Salle Green Archers at Timezone Greenbelt 3 branch on Nov. 30.

Most outstanding teachers award launched

THE ROTARY Club of Makati West and the Rotary Club of Makati Dasmarinas have recently launched the Search for the Most Outstanding Teachers in Mathematics.

The program, which was started in the mid-1990s, gives recognition to outstanding high school teachers in Makati for a chosen subject critical to the development of our youth. This year, the program will give recognition to outstanding teachers in the field of Mathematics.

The need to develop strong math competencies among the youth is serious in the light of recent findings by the National Center for Education in the United States. In 1999, its third International Mathematics and Science Study, which examined math and science skills of eighth grade students in 38 countries, revealed that the Philippines ranked 36th out of 38 countries, the lowest-rated Asian country on the list. Interestingly, the top 5 countries were all Asian (Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan).

Since solid quantitative skills is essential for Filipinos to compete in the new global economy in areas such as business and engineering, the Rotary Club of Makati West and the Rotary Club of Makati Dasmarinas have chosen to honor mathematics teachers who effectively teach and inspire their students.

The program was formally launched by president Lito Jimenez of the Rotary Club of Makati West and president Jun Turla of the Rotary Club of Makati Dasmarinas Nov. 21. Nominations are now being accepted and cash prizes will be awarded to deserving teachers. Last year, total prizes were valued at P245,000.

ESLA-MARIKINA APPLIANCE FAIR

The 1st Esla-Emilio S. Lim Appliances Marikina Appliance Fair was recently opened at the Marikina Sports Complex in coordination with the Marikina City Government and Meralco. The Appliance Fair lasts from Nov. 25 to Dec. 1. Shown during the ribbon-cutting ceremony were (from left) Albert Lim, Esla COO, Joost Vinks, president, Phil Am Insurance, Marikina Mayor Marides Carlos Fernando, and Roberto R. Lim, Esla CEO.

Product FILES

Calmoseptine: First defense against impaired skin

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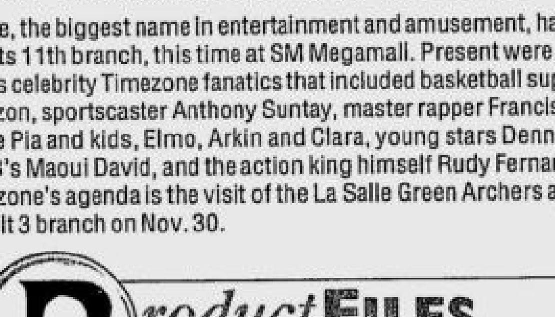
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BITS Clips

Torres High reunion

THE TORRES High School Class 1954 Alumni Association Inc. invites the Torres High School class of 1954 for a pre-Christmas reunion. Share a feast of Chinese cuisine today, Nov. 30, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Kowloon Restaurant, West Avenue. For reservations, interested parties can call Virgie Patawaran-Uy (911-2499), Milady Aguilar-Celis (253-9348), or Letty Francisco-De Jesus (372182).

Caregiver training

WELLCARE Training Center Inc. (Tesda accredited) will conduct trainings for live-in caregivers for an affordable fee for a period of six months at its training center building at Lot 15, Block 23, Dahlia corner Sampaguita Streets, TS Cruz Subdivision, Almanza II, Las Pinas City. Classes start on Jan. 6, 2003, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Enrollment is now ongoing from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays. Requirements and qualifications are: 18 years of age and above, 72 units of college, original copy of transcript of records, photocopy of birth certificate, photocopy of marriage certificate (if applicable) and 2x2 and 1x1 pictures (2 pieces each). Inquire at 842-7744 to 46 and look for Grace. Special discounts will be given to early enrollees

XAVIER CELEBRATES GRAND HOMECOMING

The Alumni Association of Xavier School (AAXS) and high school batch '77 celebrating its silver anniversary will host its annual grand alumni homecoming dubbed 'Exsena' today, Nov. 30, at the Xavier Grade School gym in Greenhills West, San Juan. The fun starts at 7 p.m. with the Spirits of '67 band and celebrities such as Dina Bonnevie, Ruby Rodriguez, ElaineVillani, Arnie Hidalgo, the Sex Bomb Girls and other surprise guests. Shown seated, from left, are George Sly, AAXS 2002 homecoming committee chair, Shaan Bermudez, 'Exsena' host, and Steven Cua, 'Exsena' co-host. Looking on are Lea Durado, AAXS 2002 homecoming committee secretary and Austin Pe, AAXS 2002 homecoming committee respresentative.

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DEC. 2 - 3	R- TIME : 5:40,8:10, 10:40 PM

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3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City

(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	HIBLA
4	BAHID
5	MASTER OF DISGUISE
6	KASIPING
7 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8 (SDDS)	HARRY POTTER
9 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Gotesco Caloocan

tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central

(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	KASIPING
2	BAHID
3	BAHID
4 (SDDS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
7 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	HIBLA
9	GISING NA SI ADAN

Gotesco Commonwealth

tel 951.0082

1	HARRY POTTER
2 (SDDS)	BAHID
3 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	KASIPING

Gotesco Ortigas

tel 656.6795

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
4	KASIPING
5 (SDDS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Universal

(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Sampaquita

(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BAHID

Dilson

(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	BAHID
Lords	TUKAAN
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	HARRY POTTER

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto

SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	KASIPING
3	RESERVE
4	BAHID
5	HARRY POTTER

FRC Cinema

(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

Berma Cinema

(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	KASIPING

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7

tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	BAHID
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4 (SDDS)	HARRY POTTER
5 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	THE TRANSPORTER
7	HIBLA

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS

tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	KASIPING
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall

(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	KASIPING
2	BAHID
3 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	HIBLA
2 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
3 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	BAHID

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall

(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	BAHID
2 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix

(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	RESERVE FOR AMA
2	RESERVE FOR AMA
3 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown

(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	BAHID
2	CHANGING LANES
3 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
4 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Magic Star Cinema

(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
3	BAHID

Lianas Cinema

(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	RESERVE
2	BRAZEN WOMAN
3 (DTS)	KASIPING
4	BALLISTIC ECK VS' SEVER

Lianas MovieCity

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3 (DTS)	KASIPING
4	HARRY POTTER
5	TOUCH

Olivarez Tri-Cinema

(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	KASIPING

Olivarez Los Baños

tel (049) 249.2558

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	KASIPING

Mega Center Mall

(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	HARRY POTTER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3 (DTS)	BAHID
4 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Cabuyao

(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	RESERVE

Emperor

(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SEX FILES
2	HARRY POTTER
3	HIBLA

Fiesta World Mall

(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	BAHID
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	HARRY POTTER
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Jade Cinema

(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
3 (DTS ES)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

DIE ANOTHER DAY 007

NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR

4173868

1	HIBLA
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	BAHID
7	KASIPING
8	CLOCKSTOPPERS

SM CENTERPOINT

7149522 -7161416

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	KASIPING
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	CLOCKSTOPPERS
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	HIBLA
7	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	MASTER OF DISGUISE
9	BAHID
10	KAILANGAN KITA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

9350749

1	CLOCKSTOPPERS
2	MASTER OF DISGUISE
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	HARRY POTTER 2
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	BAHID
9	DIE ANOTHER DAY
10	HIBLA
11	GHOST SHIP
12	KASIPING

SM CITY MANILA

5239240

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	MASTER OF DISGUISE
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	KASIPING
8	HIBLA
9	DIE ANOTHER DAY
10	KAILANGAN KITA
11	DIE ANOTHER DAY
12	BAHID

SM MEGAMALL

6331901 • 6329401

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	CLOCKSTOPPERS
6	HARRY POTTER 2
7	KASIPING
8	KAILANGAN KITA
9	BAHID
10	DIE ANOTHER DAY
11	MASTER OF DISGUISE
12	HIBLA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA

9295452

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	KASIPING
4	BAHID
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	HARRY POTTER 2
7	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	DIE ANOTHER DAY

SM SOUTHMALL

8066888

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	HIBLA
6	HARRY POTTER 2
7	BAHID
8	DIE ANOTHER DAY
9	CLOCKSTOPPERS
10	KASIPING

SM CITY CEBU

2313876

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	CLOCKSTOPPERS
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	BAHID
8	DIE ANOTHER DAY

SM CITY ILOILO

3209422

1	GHOST SHIP
2	CLOSED
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	BAHID
5	HARRY POTTER 2
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	CLOSED
8	SWEET HOME ALABAMA

SM CITY PAMPANGA

7128015

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	CLOCKSTOPPERS
4	KAILANGAN KITA
5	HARRY POTTER 2
6	BAHID

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT

8294975

1	BAHID
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER 2

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN

2514302

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	KASIPING

SM CITY DAVAO

2976998

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	SPIDER
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY

SM BICUTAN

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	TWO TIMER
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY

THE PODIUM CINEMA

18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City

1	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 10:00 FS/10:20 MF/1:30/4:40/7:50/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:40 END
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY 10:10 FS/10:30 MF/1:00/3:30/6:00/8:30/ 10:40 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:10 END

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THX	DIE ANOTHER DAY 10:50; 1:30; 4:10; 6:50; 9:30 LMF; 11:40 END
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	BAHID
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	MASTER OF DISGUISE
8	KAILANGAN KITA
9	KASIPING
10	CLOCKSTOPPERS

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Ermita

536 -7809- 12

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	KASIPING
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	BAHID
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

Metro East - Marcos hway

682- 8193 / 8280

1	KASIPING
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	HIBLA
7	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	BAHID

Novaliches

935- 3229 - 30

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	CLOCKSTOPPERS
3	BAHID
	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	KASIPING
8	HIBLA

Malabon Citisquare

285- 7671 / 7675

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	KASIPING
3	BAHID
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Star Mills- Sn Fernando, Pamp

875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270

	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	BAHID
4	CLOCKSTOPPERS
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Imus

471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	KASIPING
6	BAHID

Bacolod

441- 0453 / 0459

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
5	HIBLA
6	CLOCKSTOPPERS

Iloilo

336- 8077 - 78

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
3	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	BAHID
6	GHOST SHIP

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http //www robinsonsmovieworld com
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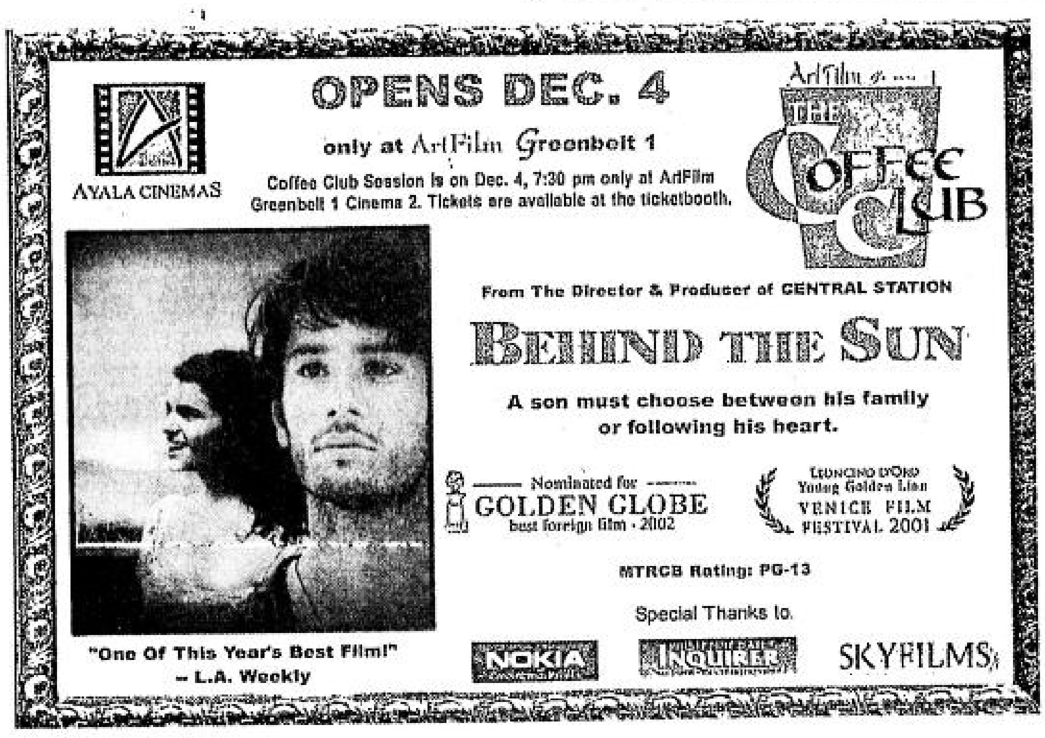

OPENS DEC. 4

only at ArtFilm Greenbelt 1

AYALA CINEMAS

Coffee Club Session is on Dec. 4, 7:30 pm only at ArtFilm Greenbelt 1 Cinema 2. Tickets are available at the ticketbooth.

ArtFilm
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From The Director & Producer of CENTRAL STATION

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A son must choose between his family or following his heart.

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Leoncino d'Oro Young Golden Lion VENICE FILM FESTIVAL 2001

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

"One Of This Year's Best Film!" – L.A. Weekly

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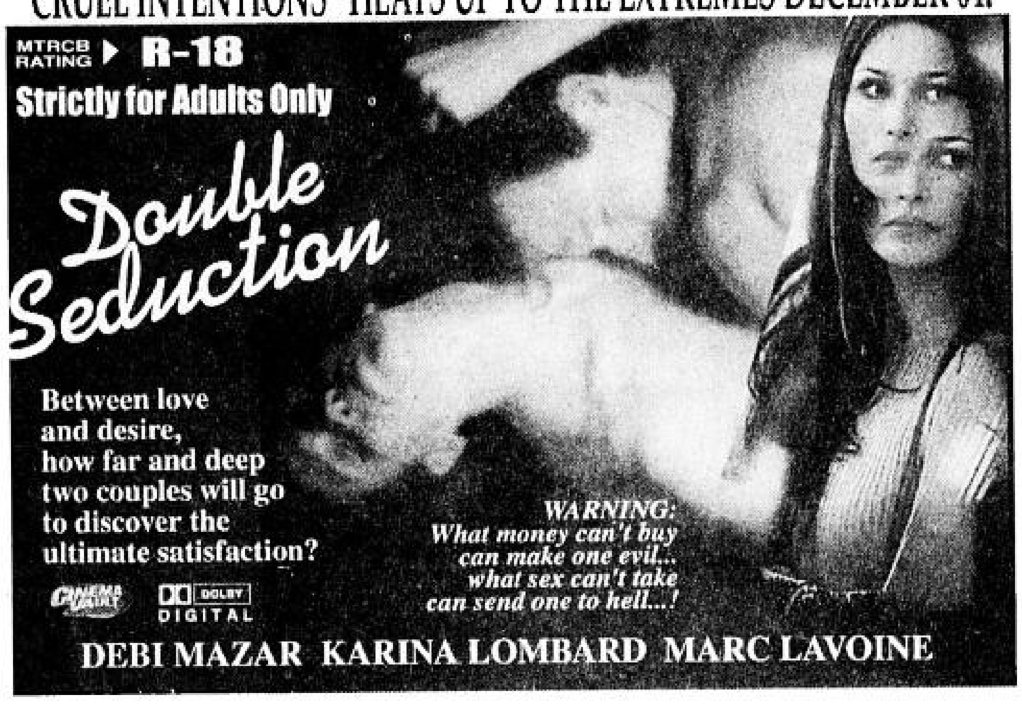
"CRUEL INTENTIONS" HEATS UP TO THE EXTREMES DECEMBER 04!



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JAPAN'S No.1 HORROR FILM SERIES IS NOW IN METRO MANILA!

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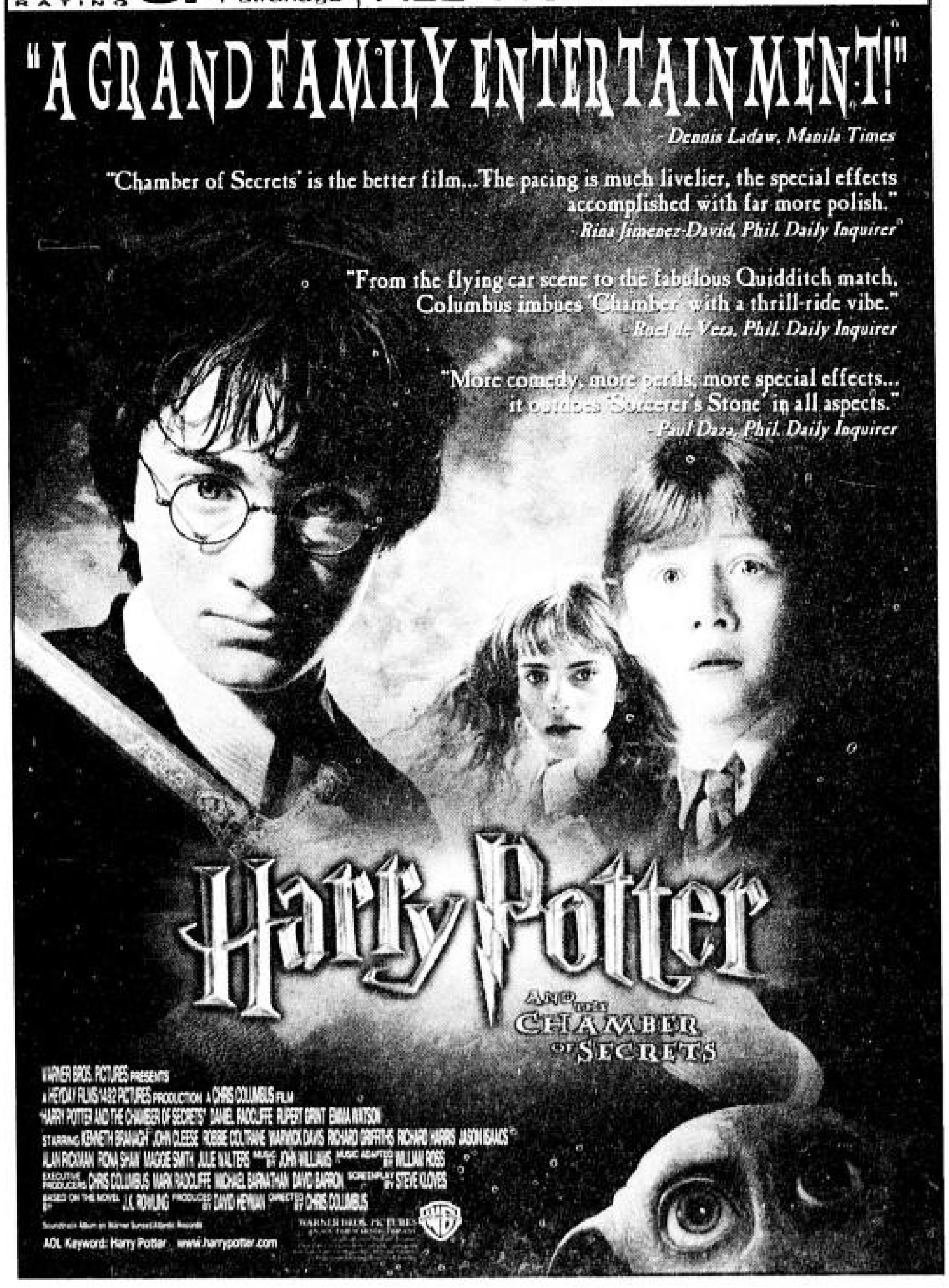

"A GRAND FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT!"
- Dennis Ladaw, Manila Times

"Chamber of Secrets' is the better film...The pacing is much livelier, the special effects accomplished with far more polish."
- Rina Jimenez-David, Phil. Daily Inquirer

"From the flying car scene to the fabulous Quidditch match, Columbus imbues 'Chamber' with a thrill-ride vibe."
- Ruel de Vera, Phil. Daily Inquirer

"More comedy, more perils, more special effects... it outdoes 'Sorcerer's Stone' in all aspects."
- Paul Daza, Phil. Daily Inquirer

Harry Potter AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

WARNER BROS. PICTURES PRESENTS
A HEYDAY FILMS/1492 PICTURES PRODUCTION A CHRIS COLUMBUS FILM
"HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS" DANIEL RADCLIFFE RUPERT GRINT EMMA WATSON
STARRING KENNETH BRANAGH JOHN CLEESE ROBBIE COLTRANE WARWICK DAVIS RICHARD GRIFFITHS RICHARD HARRIS JASON ISAACS
ALAN RICKMAN FIONA SHAW MAGGIE SMITH JULIE WALTERS MUSIC BY JOHN WILLIAMS MUSIC ADAPTED BY WILLIAM ROSS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CHRIS COLUMBUS MARK RADCLIFFE MICHAEL BARNATHAN DAVID BARRON SCREENPLAY BY STEVE KLOVES
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY J.K. ROWLING PRODUCED BY DAVID HEYMAN DIRECTED BY CHRIS COLUMBUS
WARNER BROS. PICTURES
AOL Keyword: Harry Potter www.harrypotter.com

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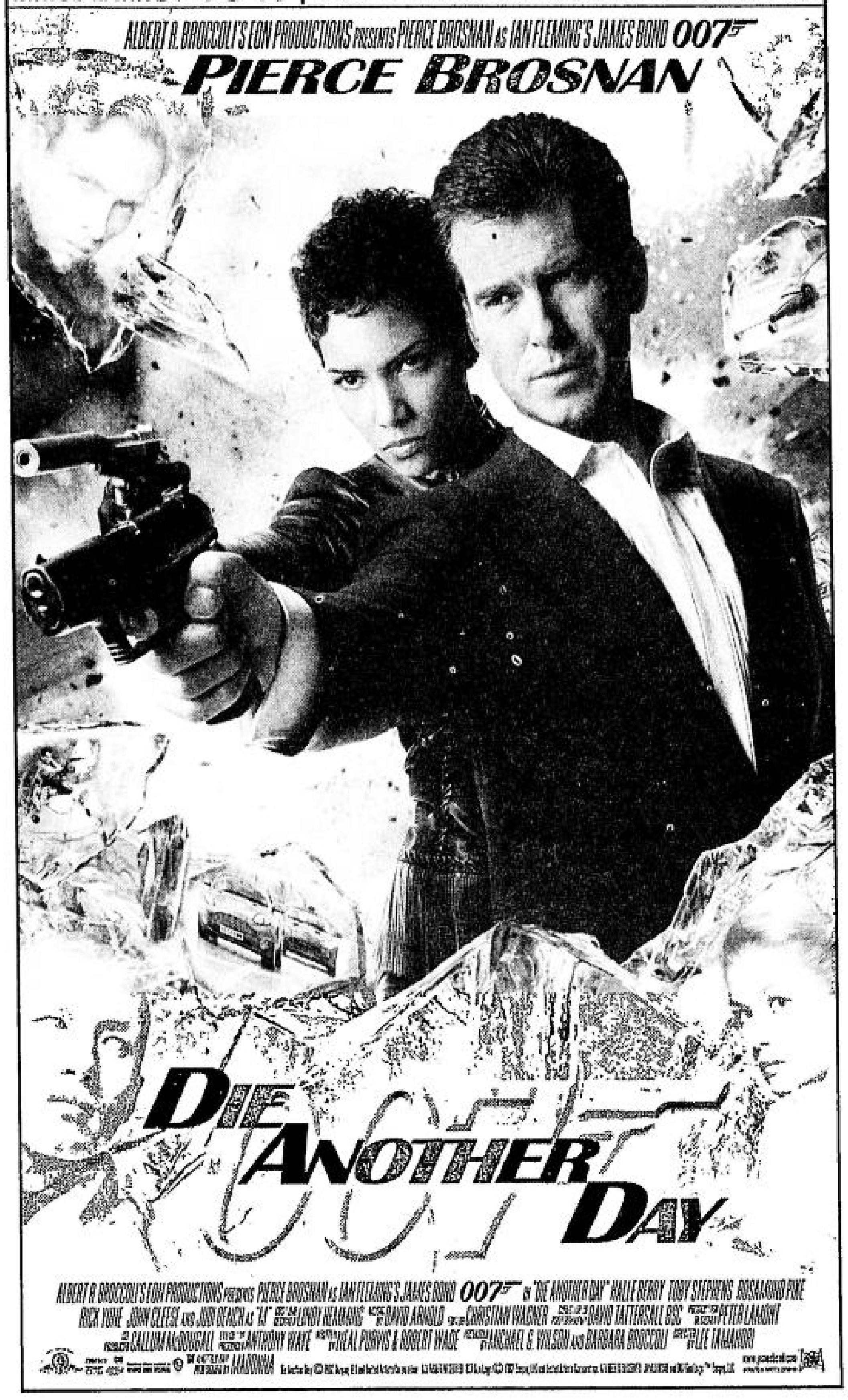

ALBERT R. BROCCOLI'S EON PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS PIERCE BROSNAN AS IAN FLEMING'S JAMES BOND 007

PIERCE BROSNAN

DIE ANOTHER DAY

ALBERT R. BROCCOLI'S EON PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS PIERCE BROSNAN AS IAN FLEMING'S JAMES BOND 007 IN "DIE ANOTHER DAY" HALLE BERRY TOBY STEPHENS ROSAMUND PIKE RICK YUNE JOHN CLEESE AND JUDI DENCH AS "M" DAVID ARNOLD CHRISTIAN WAGNER DAVID TATTERSALL BSC PETER LAMONT CALLUM McDOUGALL ANTHONY WAYE NEAL PURVIS & ROBERT WADE MICHAEL G. WILSON AND BARBARA BROCCOLI LEE TAMAHORI
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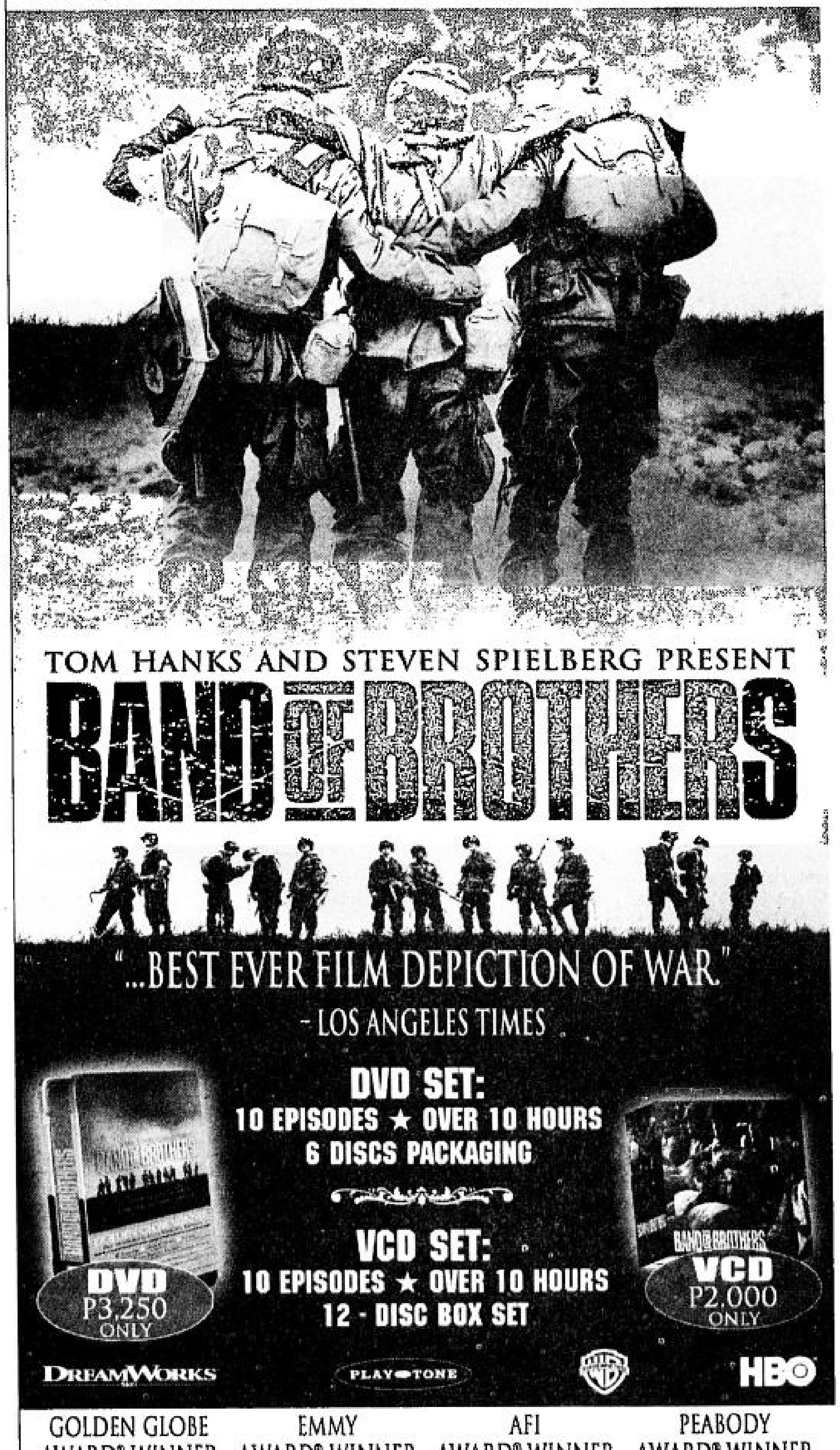

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- LOS ANGELES TIMES

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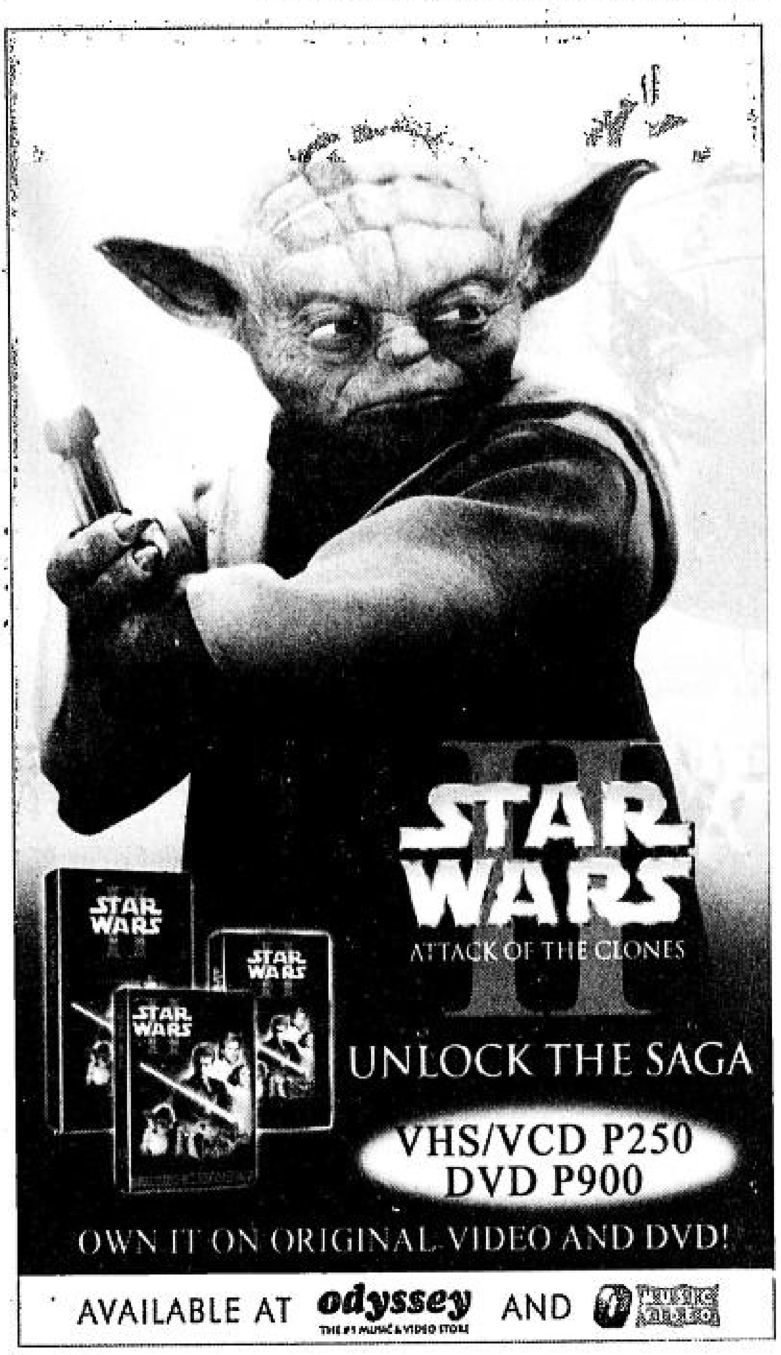

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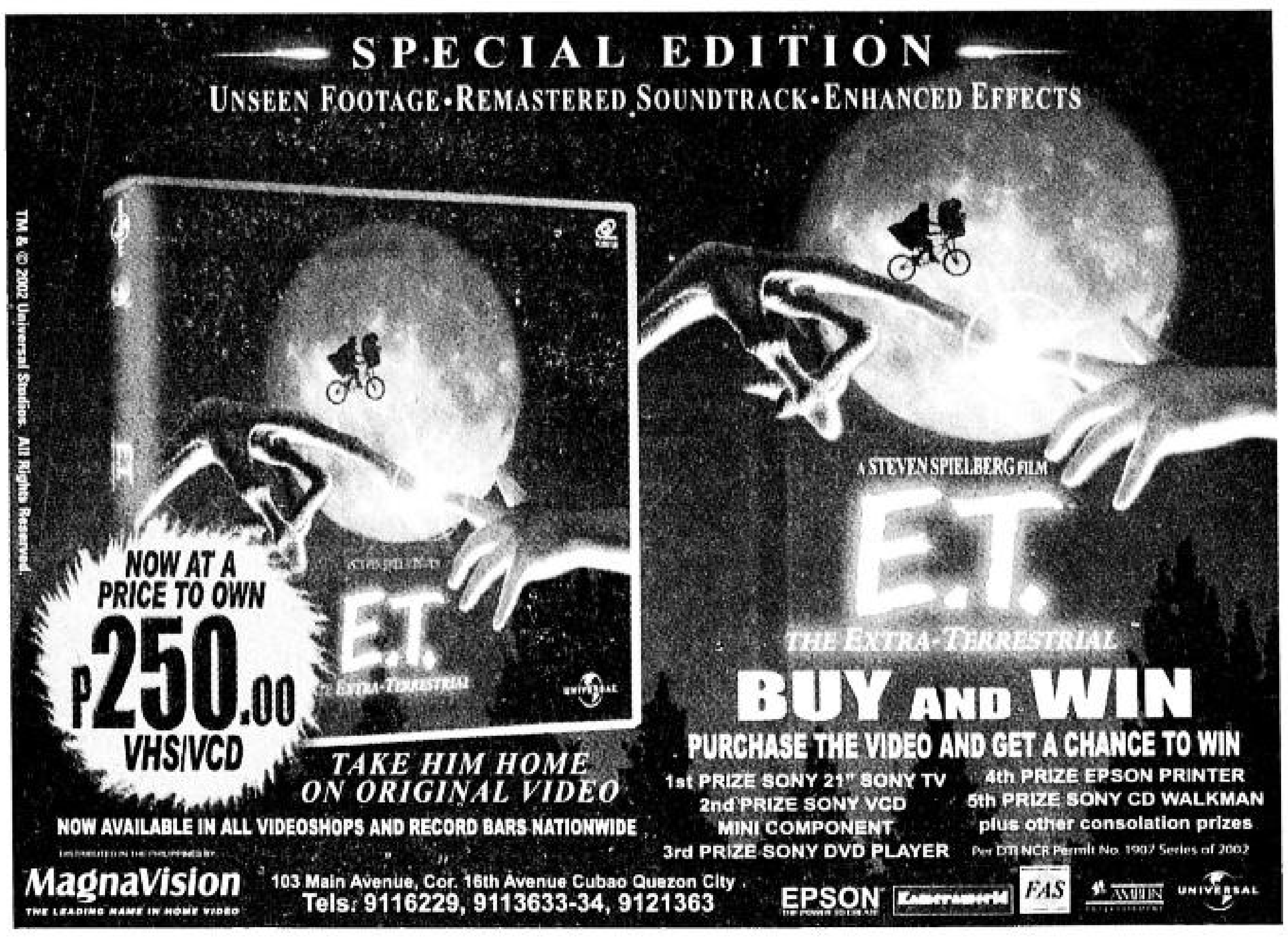

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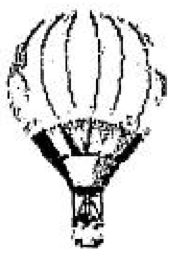

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DIE ANOTHER DAY
10:50, 1:35, 4:20,
7:05, 9:50
P13

CINEMA 2
DIE ANOTHER DAY
11:50, 2:35, 5:20,
8:05, 10:50
P13

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DEC 6, 2002	CENTER FOR POP"	7:00 PM
DEC 7, 2002	YAKAP (L.A. Lopez)"	9:00 PM

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—THE— PODIUM
CINEMA

18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
Tel: 638 9781 - 85 • 633 8976

1	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	10:00 FS/10:20 MF/1:30/4:40/7:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:40 END
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY	10:10 FS/10:30 MF/1:00/3:30/6:00/8:30/10:40 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:10 END

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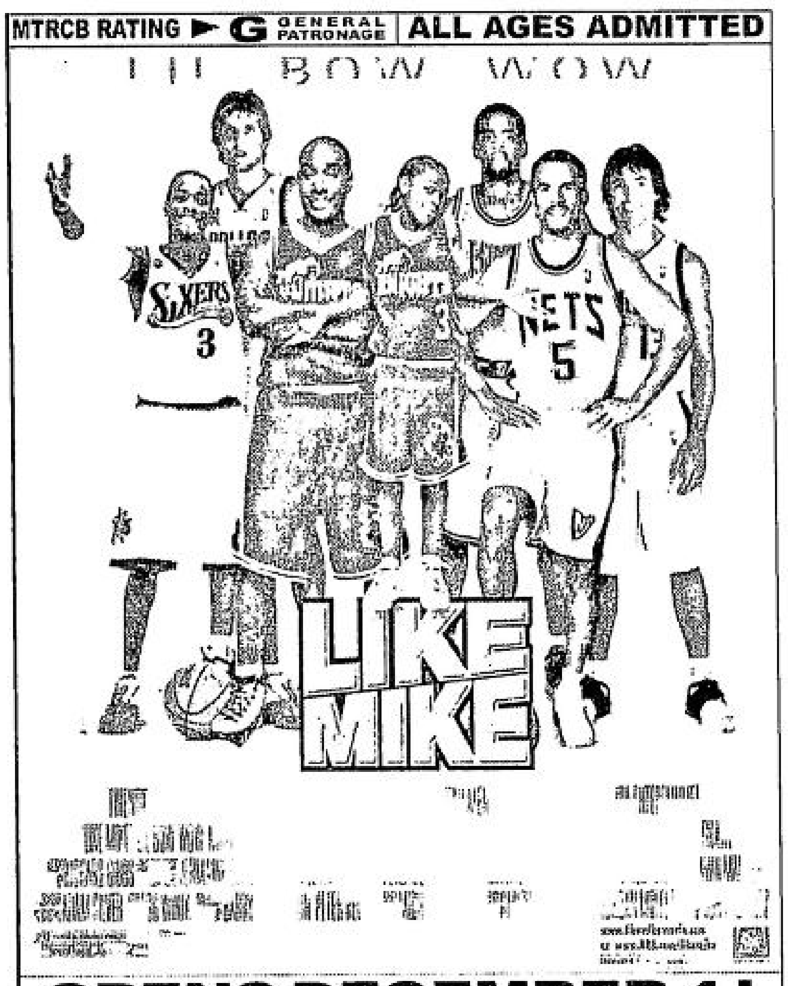

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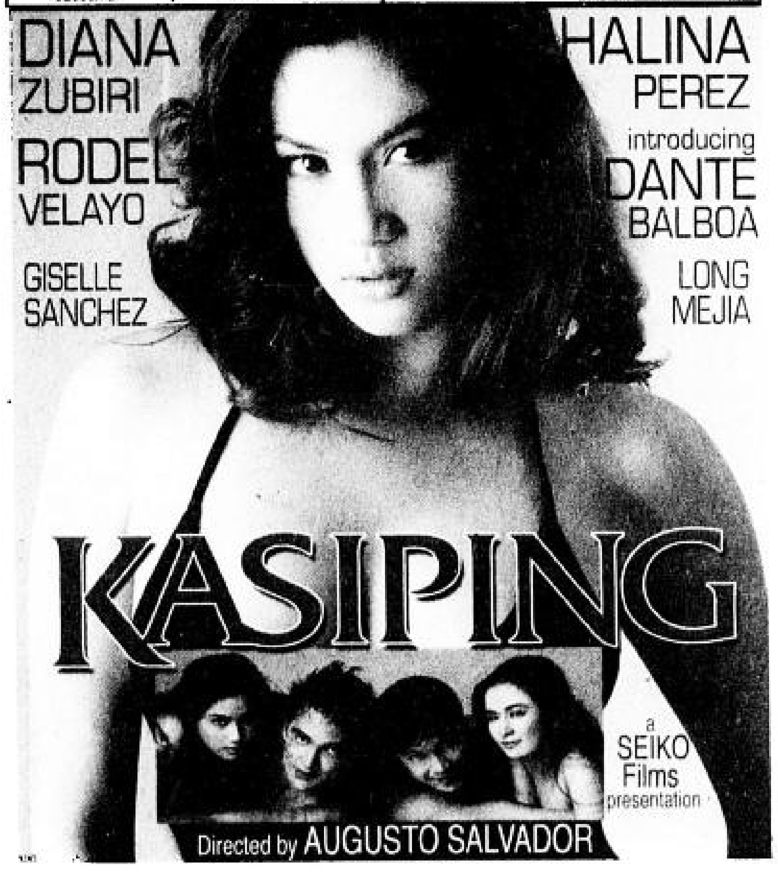

DIANA ZUBIRI
RODEL VELAYO
GISELLE SANCHEZ
HALINA PEREZ
introducing DANTE BALBOA
LONG MEJIA

KASIPING

a SEIKO Films presentation

Directed by AUGUSTO SALVADOR

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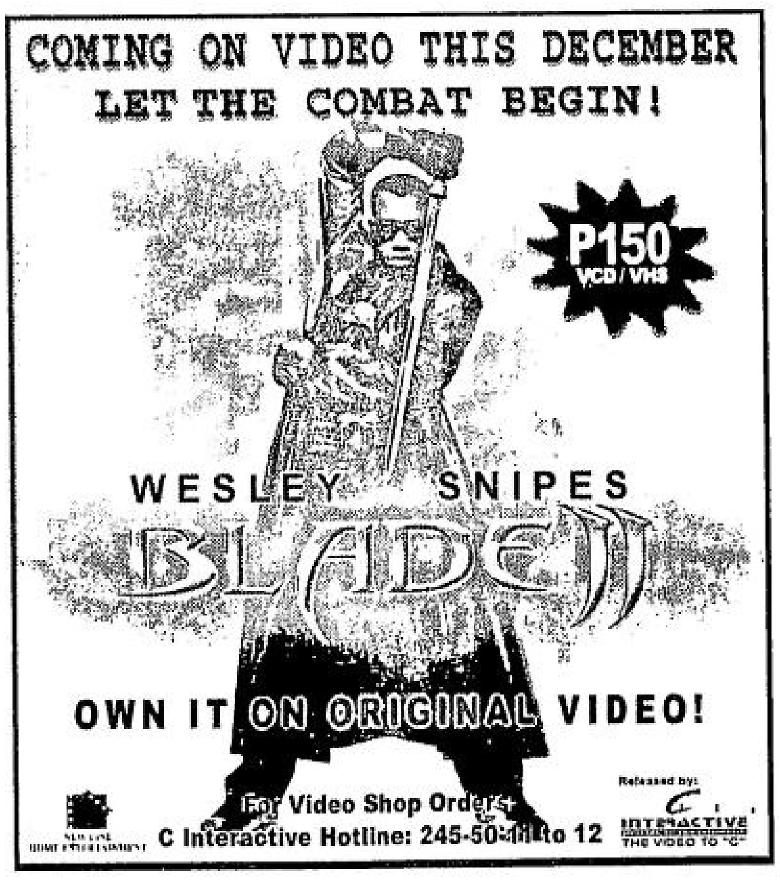

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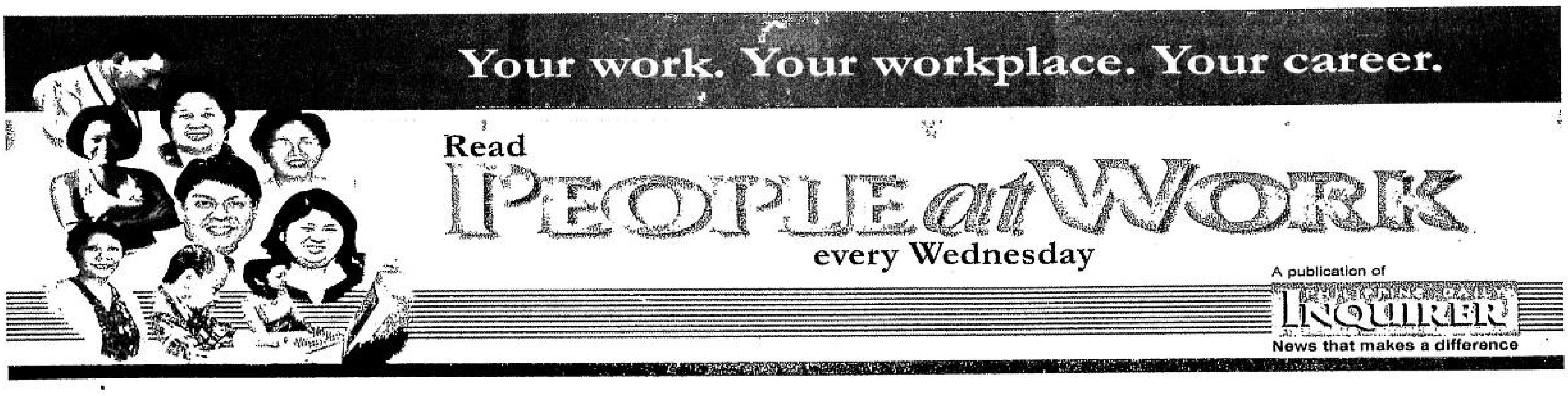

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China tightens grip on foreign stock investors

SHANGHAI—China has slapped new rules on reforms opening its domestic share markets to foreign investors, hoping to avoid the hot money flows which wreaked havoc in Asia during the 1997-98 economic crisis.

Foreigners wanting to enter China's yuan-denominated A share market under a new qualified foreign institutional investor (QFII) scheme must invest $50 million to $800 million each, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) said on Friday.

The rules do not apply to investment in China's tiny hard currency B share market, the only stocks foreigners could buy prior to the launch of the landmark QFII reform on Dec. 1.

"An important lesson from the Asian financial crisis is we should avoid short-term capital inflows from foreign securities investors and focus on introducing medium- and long-term capital," a SAFE spokesperson was quoted as saying by state newspapers.

Under rules announced in November, most QFII participants have to keep their money in China for at least one year while closed-end funds have to keep it in the country for three years.

Some fund managers said the $50 million minimum investment could be prohibitively high for smaller fund houses.

"The ceiling is not a big problem, but $50 million is a little high," said Tony Yam, research manager at Shanghai Orient-Sun International Investment Management Co Ltd.

Analysts said China faced the dilemma of having to develop its large but speculative and illiquid stock markets by allowing in more stable overseas capital while maintaining an iron grip on foreign exchange, a pillar of macroeconomic policy.

Its solution was to allow in select overseas investment funds, pensions, insurers, banks and brokerages under the QFII scheme—and impose strict curbs on the amount of money they can invest and when they can take it out of the country.

China has also said it would allow only firms that managed at least $10 billion in assets in the last fiscal year to apply.

"We have learned from the experience of Taiwan, India and South Korea to encourage medium- and long-term investors and to control the capital flow gateway," the SAFE spokesperson was quoted as saying on Friday.

The QFII announcement helped support domestic shares on Friday, with the benchmark Shanghai composite index rising 1.18 percent to 1,434.182 as retail punters hoped for capital inflows after the launch of the reform next week.

Foreign fund managers have welcomed the QFII scheme as a chance to tap China's steady economic growth of about 8 percent this year and invest in A shares, Asia's second-largest share market, capitalized at around $500 billion.

But they said a huge rush of money was unlikely as stocks were overvalued, corporate governance weak and investment criteria so strict that only the top global institutional investors were likely to qualify.

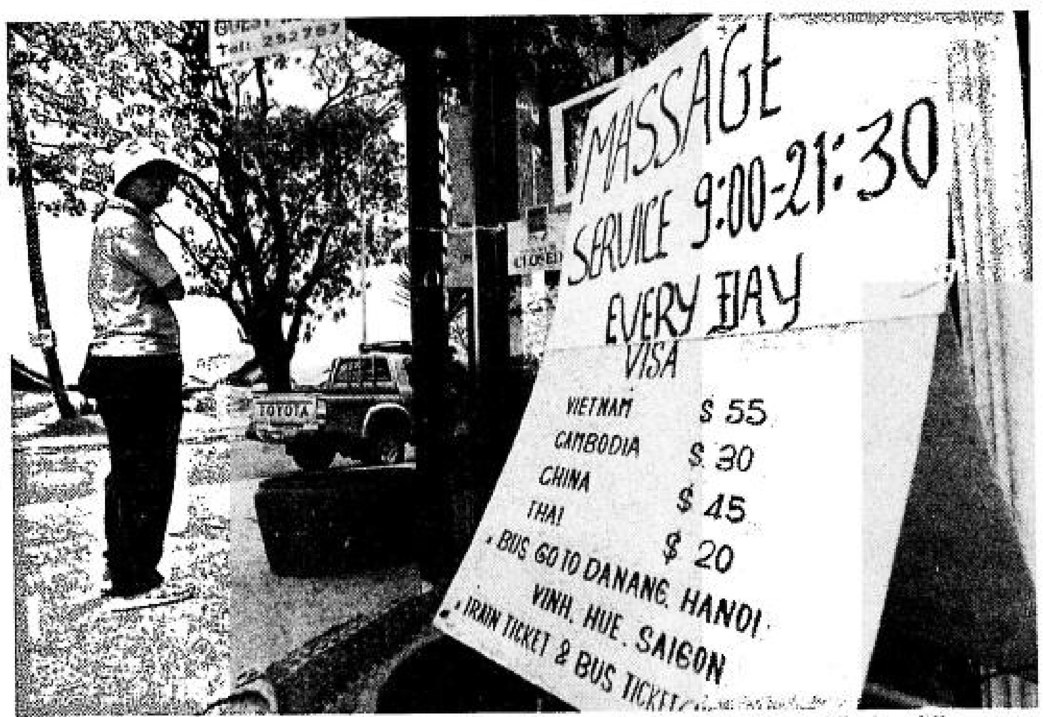
Value Partners fund manager Norman Ho said the $50 million minimum investment was quite aggressive considering it all had to be sunk into yuan-denominated shares or bonds.

Ho's firm, for example, has two funds, valued at $70 million and $200 million, which target Greater China, but they can trade Hong Kong- and Taiwan-listed stocks as well.

"So far no foreign investor has invested more than $30 million in China's B share market," said Haitong Securities' Zhang Qi. "The high investment requirement indicates regulators hope to introduce large investors to curb speculation." Industry sources also said some investment banks planned to apply for QFII under their own name, but distribute the $50-million requirement among several clients to share the risk.

Another restriction issued on Friday was that a QFII participant can only open one custodian bank account for trading A shares, no matter how many investment funds it launches.

The aim was to simplify supervision for regulators, but it complicated accounting procedures for fund houses, analysts said. *Reuters*



A TOURIST looks at a poster placed in front of a guest house in Vientiane offering different services. Tourism remains an important sector for the country's economy and with some Southeast Asian countries like Indonesia and Philippines being hit by terrorism, the sleepy and peaceful Lao does hope to attract more foreign tourists. AFP

NO VIOLATIONS

US wins appeal in WTO steel case

GENEVA—World Trade Organization (WTO) appeals judges on Thursday effectively cleared the United States of violating global trade rules by maintaining duties on some carbon steel products imported from Germany.

Their ruling, the final word in a case launched by the European Union exactly two years ago, also came down in support of US practices in treatment of goods that it sees as having benefited from even low-level subsidies.

The dispute related to German corrosion-resistant carbon steel products from privatized companies which had inherited export markets from former state-owned corporations.

The United States imposed countervailing—or balancing—duties on products from these firms in the mid-1990s, on the grounds that their cost was low because they still benefited from conditions created by previous state subsidies.

US officials decided to continue with the duties in a so-called sunset review in 2000 when their original five-year term ran out, saying that the products were still providing unfair competition to US steelmakers.

The EU, which speaks for all its 15 members in the 144-nation WTO, argued that continuation of the duties violated the organization's rules on subsidies and how they can be countered.

This line was rejected by a WTO dispute panel in July after a six-month review. But the panel also found that the United States was violating WTO agreements in the procedure it adopted in renewing the duties.

In its key finding, the WTO's Appellate Body reversed that ruling by the panel, saying that standards used by the US Commerce Department in determining the level of subsidies supporting a product were in fact in line with the rules.

The decision was immediately hailed by US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick in Washington as "a victory not only for the United States but for the multilateral trading system"—the system of agreed rules administered by the WTO.

"US trade laws are the most comprehensive in the world and play a key role in making sure American workers, businesses and farmers can compete on a level playing field," he declared, according to a release from his office. *Reuters*

Asia struggles to grasp impact of AIDS

SINGAPORE—Imagine an AIDS epidemic that would cut China's and India's projected output growth by a third.

Well, that's the optimistic scenario, according to leading US demographer Nicholas Eberstadt; under more pessimistic assumptions, the economic repercussions would be truly dramatic.

HIV, the infection that leads to AIDS, is on the brink of exploding in the world's two most populous countries, presaging a human tragedy and an economic toll that governments have been slow to wake up to, experts say.

"It's extremely clear that HIV/AIDS is not a distant problem for Asia," said Indu Bhushan, a senior economist in the Mekong Department of the Asian Development Bank in Manila.

He said governments should be under no illusion about the economic damage AIDS will inflict across Asia unless they follow the lead of Thailand and Cambodia and act promptly to curb the spread of the disease.

"Asia has the gift of time because we haven't experienced catastrophe on the scale that sub-Saharan Africa has, but we mustn't waste this time," Bhushan said.

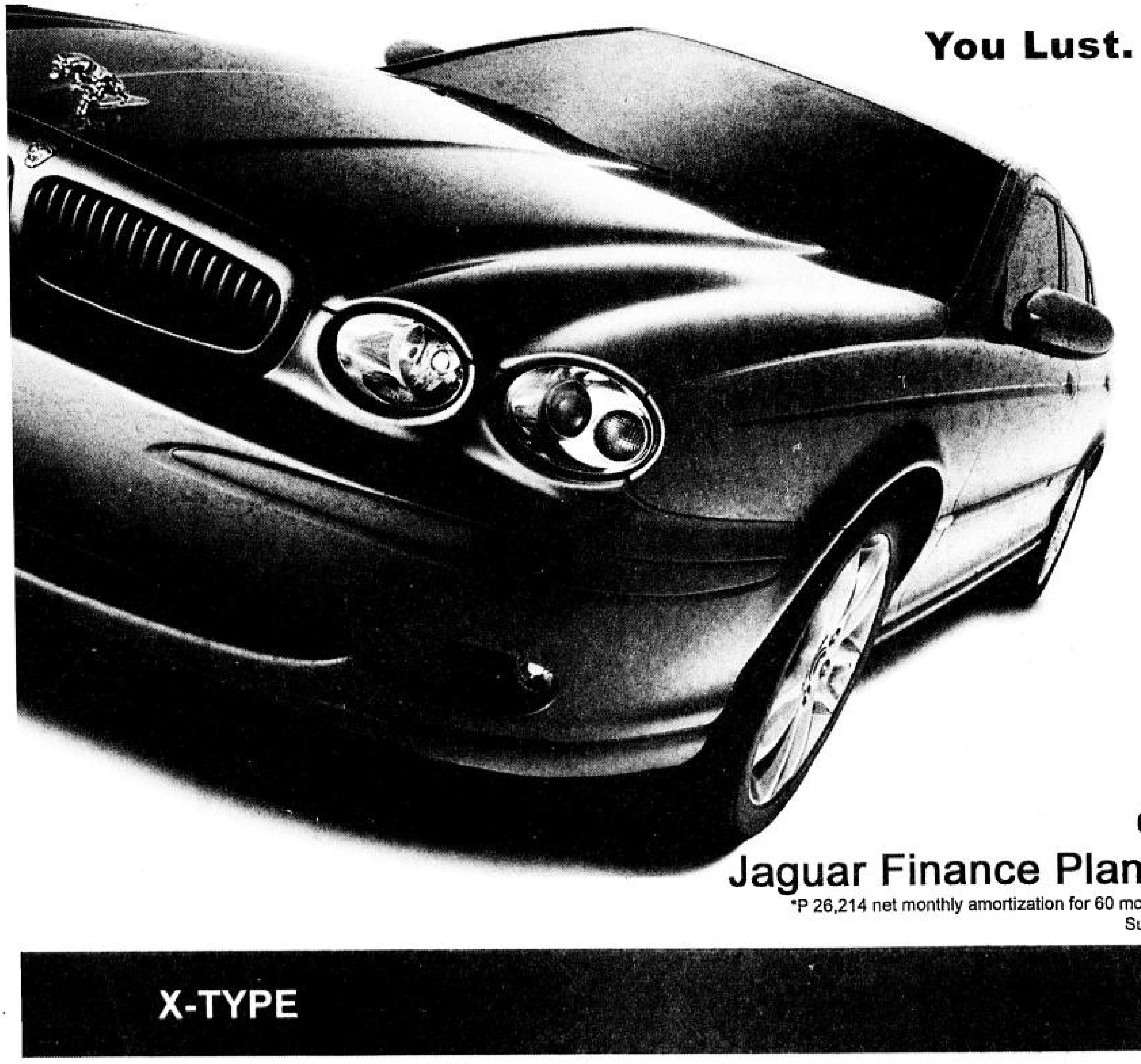
As of late 2001, roughly 28 million of the world's 40 million HIV carriers lived in sub-Saharan Africa, where perhaps 20 million people have already died and about 9 percent of the 15-49 age group is infected.

But Eberstadt said it was quite possible that in terms of absolute numbers the center of the global HIV/AIDS crisis will shift in the coming generation to Eurasia— Asia plus Russia.

Even without approaching the infection rate of sub-Saharan Africa, the economic toll in the region's three pivotal countries—Russia, India and China—will be vastly larger, he wrote in the latest edition of Foreign Affairs.

"The pandemic there stands to affect, and alter, the economic potential—and by extension, the military power—of the region's major states," Eberstadt, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, wrote. *Reuters*

JAPAN'S Honda Motor Co. Ltd. president Hiroyuki Yoshino poses with its new small sedan Fit Aria produced in Thailand at a press preview in Tokyo. Equipped with a 1.3L or 1.5 i-DSI engine that delivers nimble performance and high fuel economy of 20.5km/L, the Fit Aria goes on sale from Dec. 20 at Honda automobile dealers nationwide with price ranging between 1.393 and 1.593 million yen (about $11,418 and $13,057). AFP



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Gov't pushes RP as coco oil hub

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINES is pushing for the development of Mindanao as a strategic processing and storage center for coconut oil in the Asia-Pacific, particularly in the BIMP-Eaga area (Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Asia Growth Area).

The Philippine Coconut Authority has urged the other 14 coconut-producing member countries of the Asia and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC) to consider Mindanao to be the regional hub for the processing of copra or dried coconut flesh from which coconut oil is extracted.

Mindanao has the potential to be the regional processing center for coconut oil as it has 30 oil mills, which currently are underutilized and can be offered as processing facilities to Malaysia, Indonesia and other Asia-Pacific countries for oil milling and oleochemical production, PCA Administrator Danilo M. Coronacion said during a recent conference held in Thailand.

Mindanao's 30 oil mills have a combined capacity of 2.47 million metric tons (in copra terms). However, output from these mills was only 1.9 million metric tons in the year 2000.

According to data from the PCA, the region of Mindanao accounts for 59 percent or 1.36 million MT of the country's total coconut oil production.

Coronacion said that there was a potential to increase this level of production to supply the copra oil mills with proper planting and replanting and rehabilitation of farms.

There is, however, the challenge for coconut oil-producing countries to increase the share of coconut oil in the world vegetable oils export, which recently declined to 6.39 percent from 11.77 percent in 2001.

PCA Administrator Coronacion, however, said that there was a need to strengthen the supply reliability of coconut through a total restructuring of the industry.

In a related development, local traders and millers were urged to stop hoarding the limited supply of copra that pushes world prices to as much as $400 to $500 per metric ton.

Coronacion said local traders could hoard some P13 million worth of copra in anticipation of higher global demand that could push prices further.

However, stocking copra for more than six months also increases the possibility of developing aflatoxins in the products and lowers their potential to be sold in the international markets.

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LUHRMANN: "Everything I've ever done has been an enormous risk."

Luhrmann brings opera to Broadway

By Michael Kuchwara

NEW YORK—Baz Luhmann is upfront about the challen ge: "Bringing Italian opera to Broadway is not the easiest way to have a hit," he says with a laugh.

"I'm used to it. Everything I've ever done has been an enormous risk—with people saying, 'Are you crazy?' I'm not that heroic or brave. But there are things that for very personal and vivid reasons I want to go and do."

Extravagant

The 40-year-old Australian director already has made a name for himself with such films as the high-energy "Strictly Ballroom," a punkish, pop-flavored "William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet" and the even more wildly extravagant "Moulin Rouge."

Now, he's coming to New York with a $6.5 million, populist production of "La Boheme," plunked down in 1950s Paris, sung in the original Italian (with English surtitles) and starring a cast of youthful, sexy singers who could surprise both opera purists and

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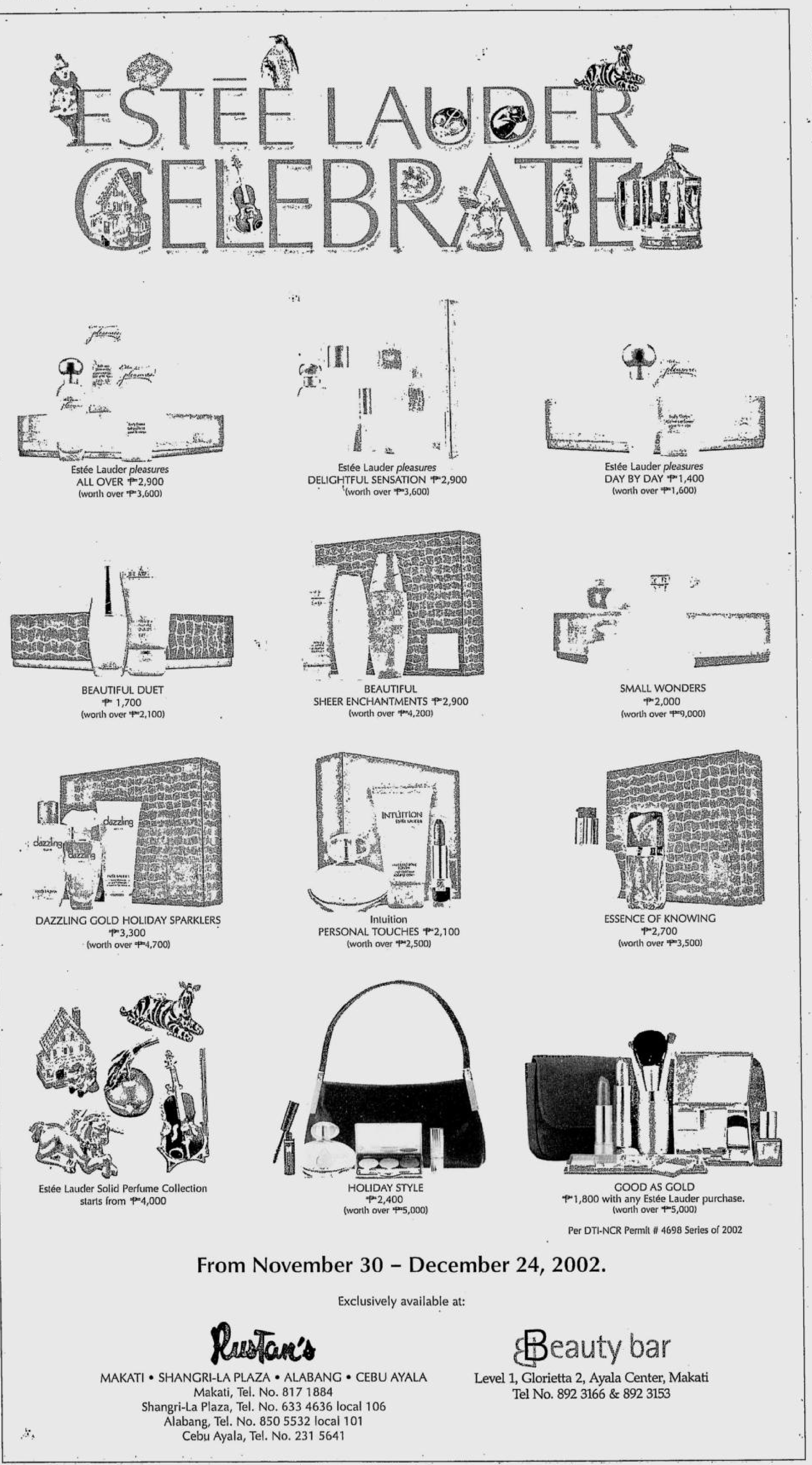

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gentxt RULES

M i 1 of thm?
It's my birthday today - and minutes after midnight, the texts & picture messages rush in. Awww. I have at least 20 well-wishers, and I haven't actually spoken to any of them. Such is a birthday in the time of text.

Now, as a huge telco launches a series of commercials about "Gentxt" - for phone users 13 and up, though the ads are pitched squarely at teenagers -- you wonder: who or what, really, is Gentxt? When everyone from your dad to the "manang" at the canteen wants your new ringtone, could there really still be a Generation Text?

Your own space
Ah, text. When our descendants excavate our culture centuries from now, they'll find us clutching our phones - and they'll wonder what could've been in these tiny boxes that so enraptured us.

For me, it's that text gives you both privacy from your surroundings and a virtual barkada anytime you want it. Especially for teens, feeling adult but still tied to parents, text is your undiluted identity, the one thing no one can touch. Your phone reflects you, in its look, sound, even the message itself - ALWYS ALL CAPS 4 NO PARTICLR REASON, or W A CHRNC VWEL DFCNCY THT STRNS T BRAIN. There, you can be exactly who you want, when you want, to only the friends you want - shutting out your 3-hour commute, your droning landlady, your headache from too much instant ramen and not enough sleep. None of these matter outside the little screen -- and that's exactly how we like it.

Mall culture <=> Text culture
This is one reason Gentxt has not only flourished, but evolved. From one tribe into a range of sub-tribes - the ads identify textus OA-us, textus Oldatymus, textus Alaskadorus. Everyone can relate to at least one episode, where the phone is your prank accomplice, fashion accessory, cryptic oracle ("what does he mean?"), or status badge - and with groups like this, your gimmick tool as well.

It's a great idea, actually. With your phone you can summon up a gimmick at will; why not add the gimmick places too? From an outfit or haircut beforehand, to dinner and movies or an arcade, to drinks, dessert and even your guilt exercise the next day, you can actually map the whole thing with your Gentxt card -- at a discount. As the ad helpfully points out - "Matindi ang mall power."

Which matters. The rise of the cellphone paralleled the malls' total conquest. As our parents love to remind us, we have no concept of life before airconditioning and plastic. Mall culture is one of constant newness - "Ay, wala pa bang bago?" - shiny choices precooked and served with fastfood efficiency. Text is the perfect communication for this endless browsing: how else could you broadcast new discoveries, pull in friends in the area, make three appointments in a night and change them like dominos from one hour to the next?

No plans are ever final; everything is ad hoc ("Anong oras? Let's see - text-text"). Now, the notion of an evening planned in advance seems oh so quaint - and unnecessary. Who needs a Global Positioning System, when we've got "WRU?"

A Pinoy thing
Text is also one of the few things Pinoys lead the world at. It's still a cult in the US, like us, circa '94 or '95; in Europe it's suddenly hot after being ignored for years. A British group has characters in a play "texting" audience members their thoughts; Norwegians are using it to draw youth to the Bible. Now that it's finally catching on, we can say we loved it first -- and Pinoys everywhere have years of text lore to share with fascinated blond people. I can't wait.

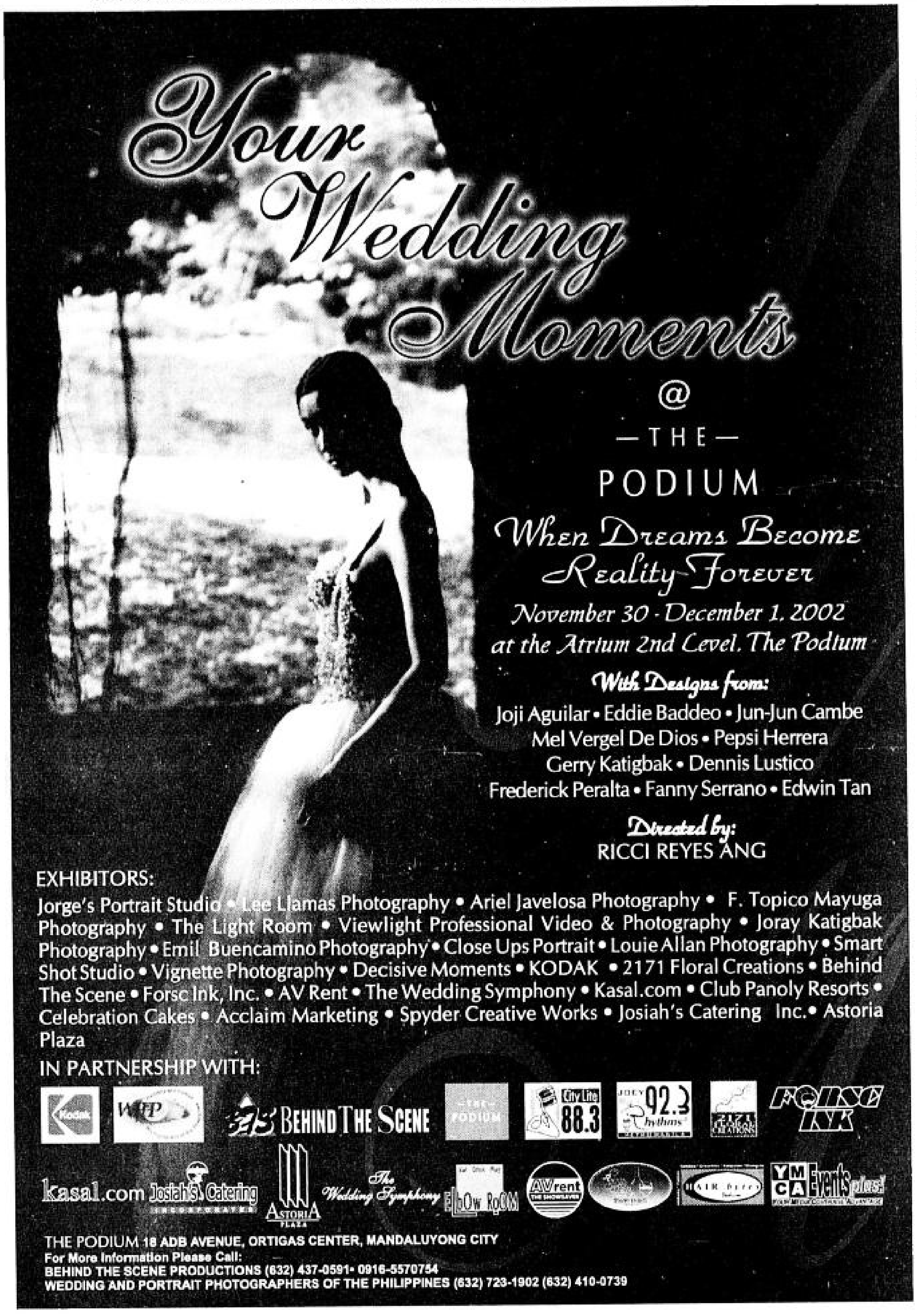
Pinoys visiting from abroad find our text compulsion ridiculous, until they start and get totally hooked. They text when they're home, call when they're abroad - in some weird way, text is intertwined with being Pinoy. And why not? To us, text is freestyle: a set of symbols you can slice, dice, put your own stamp on and give a life of its own.

When anything happens, our first instinct is to text friends about it. It's one continuous impulse: from your brain, through your fingers, into the phone and out to the world. As you think it, your friends know it. Telepathy's arrived.

You don't realize how it's hardwired in your system until you leave. I'm a low-to-moderate texter here, but I went abroad without my phone recently (though for the record, Globe users can roam whether they're prepaid or on plans) -- and I was forever reaching for my phone and missing it.

So who's Gentxt now? As long as there's something young in us - wanting to show off, needing to belong, compelled to vent with or without a response, fleeing monotony for a private space just bigger than two postage stamps -- there will always be Gentxt. And no matter how many birthdays pass, I'll be in it.

Gentxt welcomes Globe Handyphone users age 13 and up. To find out more, call 730-1000 or 211 from your Globe Handyphone.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With a song in her heart

ON Dec. 11 at Teatro Aguinaldo, Bing Pimentel's songs will be showcased in a symphonic concert topbilling ace interpreters like Dulce, Freddie Aguilar, Pinky Marquez, Isay Alvarez, Bimbo Cerrudo, Gamaliel Viray, and Shiela Asuncion.

The songs composed by Sen. Nene Pimentel's talented wife are taken from different shows and revues that have been staged through the years—"Buhay, Isang Awit," "Nasaan si Hesus?" and "Huwag Pumayag sa Dagdag-Bawas"—and have also been compiled in two albums.

Bing's songs from "Buhay, Isang Awit" are popular because they are inspired by her family's experiences, which many people can empathize with. Her religious side is highlighted in her compositions for "Nasaan si Hesus?" while her concern for values and probity in public life is expressed by her strong anti-electoral fraud numbers from the "Dagdag-Bawas" show.

The new element in Bing's Dec. 11 concert is the fact her songs will be performed in symphonic grandeur (by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra), a longtime dream of hers that has finally found musical fruition.

PIMENTEL. Her compositions will be performed in symphonic grandeur.

CERRUDO AND VIRAY. Featured male singers in Bing Pimentel's concert.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Spotlight on Michelle Rodriguez

RODRIGUEZ. Has come along at exactly the right time.

Now that women are starring in action films (Angelina Jolie in "Lara Croft, Tomb Raider," Halle Berry in "Die Another Day"), Michelle Rodriguez has come along at exactly the right time. Michelle is one of the most physically fit and limber young talents around, so expect her to go all-action real soon.

Her breakthrough role was in "Girlfight," and she next made a strong impression in "The Fast and the Furious." Now, in "Blue Crush," the character she plays rides Jet Skis and surfs.

Why does she like playing "tough girl" roles? Michelle shares, "Because they say I have natural athletic ability, which means I can pick up a sport or action routine more easily than other actresses."

Does she prefer surfing over Jet Skiing? "No, it's the other way around! I only had two weeks to learn how to surf for the film, so it was all a blur. Then, we shot in the middle of winter. I was like, 'Look at the size of those waves! You guys want me to go out there? What are you, nuts? Give me a Jet Ski!'"

How tough was it for the movie's female leads to do justice to the production's sports and action scenes? "Very! But Kate Botsworth and Sanoe Lake were like me, down to earth, and that really helped us work well together. I get along completely with people who are as grounded as they are, so it all worked out—and we survived!"

'Pasko Naming Hangad'

What sort of Christmas do we truly desire? Musically, Hangad answers that question with "Pasko Naming Hangad," featuring new compositions and arrangements by Bro. Arnel Aquino, S.J., Paulo Tirol, Vincent de Jesus and JC Uy.

Also showcased are performances by the chamber orchestra behind "Matins," and Noel Cabangon. "Pasko Naming Hangad" is a call to return to the simplicity and holiness of the first Christmas, filled with joy and love of family.

To launch the new album, Hangad will have a special concert at the Church of the Gesu, Ateneo de Manila University, at 6 p.m. on Dec. 6. "Pasko Naming Hangad" is produced by the Jesuit Music Ministry of the Jesuit Communications Foundation.

Luhrmann brings opera . . .

From page C1

Broadway show folk.

"'La Boheme' really was the television of its time—it plays to the child and to the adult," the director states emphatically. "And if you are looking to play to everyone, you are not going to find them in a state theater or an opera house, you are going to find them on Broadway."

Opera has had an odd, fitful history on Broadway.

Pop version

Disney's pop version of "Aida," with a score by Elton John and Tim Rice, has been a considerable hit, still running after more than two years. But then, there was "My Darlin' Aida" (1952), which time-traveled Verdi's melodies to the Confederacy of the Civil War. It lasted three months.

Contemporary opera composers have had mixed success. Gian Carlo Menotti scored with two productions—a double bill of "The Telephone" and "The Medium" (1947) which ran for over 200 performances and "The Consul," (1950) which lasted for eight months and won the New York Drama Critics' Circle prize for best musical of the season.

Kurt Weill's "Street Scene" (1947) and Marc Blitzstein's "Regina," based on "The Little Foxes," both flopped on Broadway, but later had runs in opera houses around the world.

Producers hope "La Boheme" will do better. Advance ticket sales are strong, although the producers declined to reveal exact figures. They started to climb after the theater's box office opened in October and after television stations in the New York area began showing a very stylized, 30-second commercial directed by Luhrmann, his first.

The director has been obsessed with "La Boheme" for a long time. He staged it in Australia at the Sydney Opera House in 1990. It was that version producers Jeffrey Seller and Kevin McCollum saw on American public television when they were working on another version of Puccini's opera, a little something called "Rent."

"They used it as an example of how 'Rent' should be," Luhrmann said. "I agreed that we should revisit 'La Boheme' and deal with the issue that we began with years ago, which is, addressing this work as if it were being done for the first time."

Fall tryout

So far, the results have been encouraging. The production was rapturously received during its fall tryout in San Francisco by both critics and audiences. It quickly sold out, and Luhrmann was pleased by the people he reached. Some two-thirds were nonoperagoers.

"There was no demographic," he said. "One of the beautiful things happening was fathers taking their kids and telling them the story. But then, there were groovy, young 18-year-olds, people on date nights, and lots of old ladies, in the audience, too."

But that hasn't stopped the perfectionist Luhrmann from fine-tuning the show, which has settings designed by his wife, Catherine Martin, a woman he refers to affectionately in conversation as C.M.

So he's spending much of his time here at the Broadway Theater, where "La Boheme" began preview performances Nov. 29, in preparation for an opening on Dec. 8.

It took him two years to find the right cast for Puccini's tale of starving artists and doomed romance in late 19th-century Paris. Luhrmann's staff auditioned more than 2,000 singers in London, New York and Milan, Italy.

"I worked with 200 singers myself," he says, before settling on the three sets of Mimis and Rodolfos who star in the production. "It nearly wiped me out. "These are not big-voiced, mature performers, but I did have three requirements: one, that they could sing it; two, that they could act it; and three, that they looked like the characters.

Different interpretation

"And what I did do, because I didn't want them to have a generic look, was make sure they didn't look alike. For example, one Rodolfo is 6-foot-tall and blond, classically romantic; another is very James Dean-like and energetic. They give quite different interpretations. They deliver the same promise but with a different nuance."

And in San Francisco, Luhrmann said, the production received exactly the same enthusiastic reception, no matter who performed.

What will opera purists think, especially since the size of the orchestra has been reduced to accommodate Broadway's stringent economics? Luhrmann is unfazed.

"It is a smaller orchestra," he said, "but Puccini did reductions anyway to go on tour. "We haven't cut a single note. The music director is conducting the score more like Toscanini did with the original. Toscanini and Puccini were all about the rhythm of real life!" *AP*

BRANDO as Stanley Kowalski in "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Unforgettable sequences in Hollywood movies

By Behn Cervantes

WHO can forget the top shot of a drunken and virile Stanley Kowalski desperately screaming "Stellaaaah!" at his confused wife (Kim Hunter) in "A Streetcar Named Desire"? The 1951 award-winning film transcription of the Tennessee Williams stage success is forever remembered for that stunning scene.

Sex symbol

The film introduced the primal power the Actor's Studio's Marlon Brando could harness for the screen, giving a sense of vulnerability as well as animal drive. That role made the young Brando a sex symbol for decades.

In the same film, the ethereal Blanche Dubois (Vivien Leigh), his spinster sister-in-law, lapses into her imagined world and enigmatically states to her earthbound brother-in-law, "I have always relied on the kindness of strangers."

The capability of a film director to stage a scene and set up a dramatic shot of great impact makes those scenes memorable. Lighting and appropriate music add depth, texture and mood.

I remember how impressed I was by a low-angle shot of Elaine Stewart in "The Bad and the Beautiful," a 1952 film that took a biting and jaundiced look at the film industry. Stewart was the most beautiful starlet of MGM at that time.

Lover

An emotionally shaken Lana Turner surprises her lover Kirk Douglas in the producer's home to confront him. While an impassive Douglas tries to calm her down, the battling duo are interrupted by the unexpected entry of a siren slinking down the stairs, proving that Turner's fears are well-founded.

Svelte Stewart is in a tight low-cut gown with long wavy hair cascading down her beautiful shoulders. She is Veronica Lake and all other man-eaters incarnate. She epitomizes feminine pulchritude at its most sinful *and* desirable!

I always wondered why Elaine Stewart didn't become a bigger star, because MGM had rightly touted her as the next Ava Gardner. The former model had impeccably beautiful features, green lynx-like eyes, a curvaceous body, ample sex appeal and talent.

For some strange reason, all she managed in later years was to become the love interest of John Derek in a desert romance adventure titled "Hajji Baba." She was also Richard Widmark's alcoholic girlfriend in "Take the High Ground."

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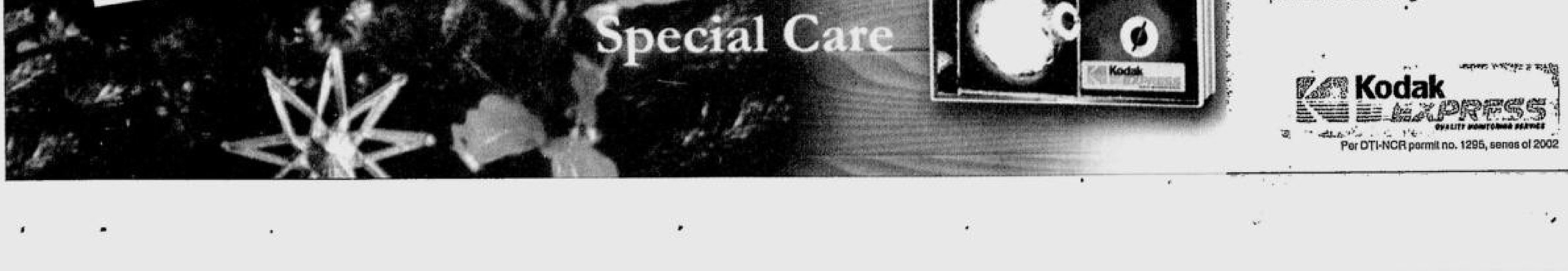

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Young viewers cite their favorite teen drama shows

CAST OF "TABING ILOG." Good actors.

By Noelani Torre

WHEN "Beverly Hills 90210" became a big hit in the States and all over the world, local TV networks became aware of the money-making, audience-attracting potential of teenage dramas.

Youth market

Sure enough, when teen drama shows were introduced on local television several years ago, they became undisputed hits. It was a smart move on the part of the networks, as the Philippines has always had a strong youth culture—and, more importantly, market.

The shows had thousands—maybe even millions—of fans who faithfully followed the dramatic events in their favored fictional characters' lives. Because the stars were youthful, young viewers felt that they did indeed represent the youth. But the more glamorous lives of these television teens also gave their audience a less realistic image to strive for.

Nowadays, these shows don't attract as many viewers as they used to, but that doesn't mean that they're passé. In fact, their makers are continuously finding new ways to make them more attractive. The question is, are they effective?

We asked some young viewers to cite the teen drama show or series they like most, and why. Most of them chose "Tabing Ilog," and here's why:

Realistic

"My favorite would be 'Tabing Ilog' *kasi pwede maging totoo ang mga pinapalabas nila, pwera nga lang sa buhay ng* character *ni* Kaye Abad, *si* Eds, *kasi masyadong ma*-drama.

"Realistic *ang mga palabas nila* and they also tackle current issues affecting young people, like pre-marital sex, going to college, etc.

"Yung pacing *di masyadong bitin o mabagal, tama lang. Bagay din ang mga* actors *sa* roles *na binigay sa kanila*—for example, *si* Baron Geisler as Fonzy. Effective *talaga*."—*Dinah Calizar, 19, Los Baños, Laguna.*

Fresh

"I like 'Click' because fresh *at ang gaganda ng mga* actresses *nila, lalung-lalo na si* Charley. She's so sexy.

"I also like their different approaches to romantic relationships—every pair in the show has its own particular situation and problems. Convenient *din ang* time slot *ng* show—after your weekend gimmick, *'pag uwi mo may mapapanood ka na*."—*Stanley Lopez, Makati, 17.*

Problems

"I like 'Tabing Ilog.' It's different from the other teen shows because the setting is not in the metropolis. The story doesn't just focus on love between teenagers, but also on family and financial problems—all kinds of problems that today's youth really encounter.

"This is also the only teen drama show where there are poor characters. In the other shows, they always portray privileged teens and they're not easy to relate to.

"Above all, among teen drama shows, 'Tabing Ilog' is the one I 'prescribe' for the youth because it gives us important life lessons."—*Fernando Ambrad Jr., 19, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon.*

Different

"I'm watching 'Berks' now mainly because it's new and I'm expecting something different from the other shows. I used to watch 'G-mik' and the stars from 'G-mik' are now in this show—Heart Evangelista, John Prats, etc.

"They're younger than the other shows' characters *at dahil doon mas maiintindihan mo yung pagiging maarte nila*. They're also very cute. The show's just starting *kaya masaya pang abangan*."—*April Rose Lacdag, 14, Cagayan de Oro.*

Emotions

"'Tabing Ilog' is my favorite mainly because of its cast. They're good actors. The emotions they project are real *at madadala ka talaga*. And they make you look forward to what's going to happen next.

"The stories are more *pang-masa*, not like in other shows where everybody is rich and their problems are only about love and relationships. In 'Tabing Ilog' the problems are more realistic, so we can relate more.

"They don't only discuss romantic relationships but also friends, school, and other issues. The age level of the characters is also nearer to mine, and that makes them easier for me to relate with.

"The only thing I don't like about the show is that the relationships formed are all confined to their gang. It's like they're just exchanging partners! *Nakakainis*. But I like the *probinsya* setting because it reminds me of home. And I really like it that they're only middle-class characters, not filthy-rich teens with cars and mansions. They also have tuition fee problems like we sometimes have."—*Abegail Inting, Quezon City, 20.*

Unforgettable . . .

From page C3

Derek, one of Hollywood's best-looking actors in the '50s, is best remembered as the husband of Bo Derek. Before Bo, John was married to Swiss bombshell Ursula Andress.

For her part, Andress is usually associated with another fabulous film sequence. Who can forget her body and sensuous look in the James Bond mega-hit, "Dr. No?" The sequence where she emerges from the sea is often likened to the painting, Birth of Venus by Boticelli. It caused the temperature of millions of men around the world to rise. Nothing she ever did could top that attention-getting scene.

When Gloria Swanson made a well-publicized return to the movies in 1950, it was in the fabulous acting vehicle, "Sunset Boulevard." Playing has-been Silent Screen superstar Norma Desmond, she imagines the movie industry is eager for her return to the big screen. This fantasy is abetted by a butler (Erich Von Stronheim) who pampers her overblown ego and tells her that it is time for her to resurrect her career with a new script written by an ambitious young wannabe (William Holden).

Descent to insanity

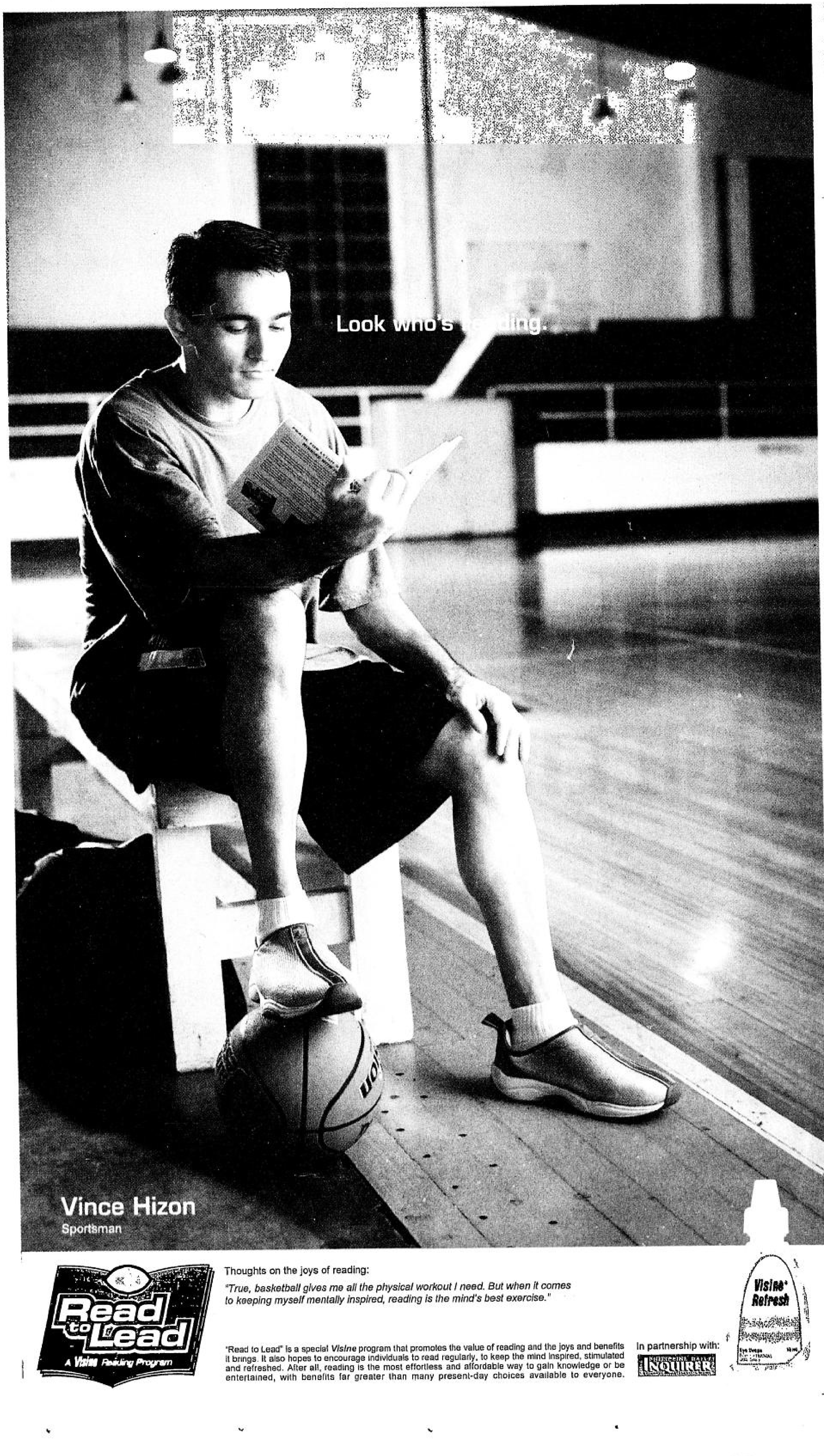
In the end, after a mental breakdown and a rapid descent to insanity, she dramatically states, "I am ready for my close-up, Mr. (Cecil B.) De Mille"—another unforgettable scene!

Finally, "Shane" starred Alan Ladd, Jean Arthur and Van Heflin. But the actor who won all our hearts in that film was the young, blond and slightly cockeyed Brandon de Wilde.

His admiration for the mysterious Shane is sustained throughout the film. This growing love for his role model peaks when Shane rids the beleaguered frontier town of its bad men, led by Jack Palance.

The enigmatic Shane rides towards the sunset. The boy Brandon de Wilde runs after him screaming "Shannnnnne, come back, Shannnnne!," the mountains reverberating with his plea.

To this day, drop the movie's title and film buffs will instantly become Brandon de Wilde and proceed to scream, "Shannne...Come back, Shannnne." We were all touched by his innocence and unadulterated love!



Thoughts on the joys of reading:

"True, basketball gives me all the physical workout I need. But when it comes to keeping myself mentally inspired, reading is the mind's best exercise."

"Read to Lead" is a special *Visine* program that promotes the value of reading and the joys and benefits it brings. It also hopes to encourage individuals to read regularly, to keep the mind inspired, stimulated and refreshed. After all, reading is the most effortless and affordable way to gain knowledge or be entertained, with benefits far greater than many present-day choices available to everyone.

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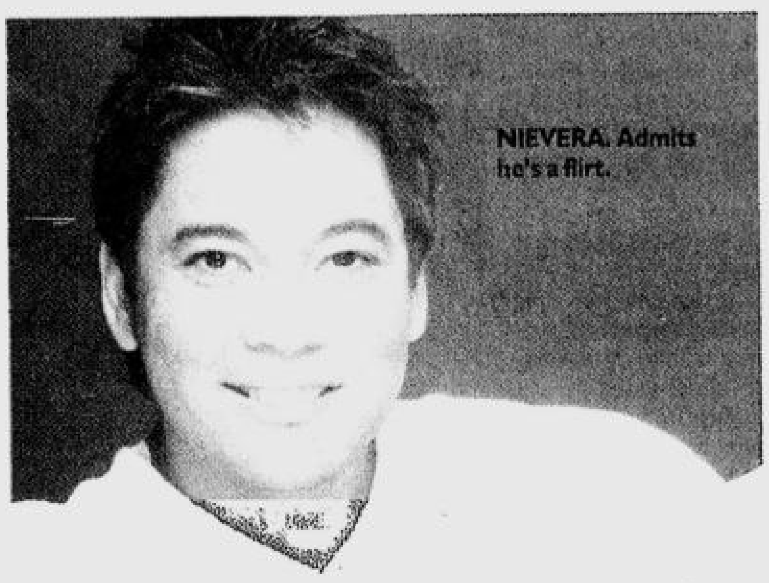
Martin Nievera to hold Christmas concert



NIEVERA. Admits he's a flirt.

By Gloria P. Sicam

AS I listen to Martin at the presscon for yet *another* concert of his, (8:30 p.m., Dec. 14 at the PICC Plenary Hall) I wonder: why aren't people sick of him yet? He's done concert after concert after concert, and yet people *still* watch him.

Ability

As I mull over Martin's ability to get away with anything, I find myself getting interested in what he is saying. The press, naturally, asks the question first: WHY?

My "WHY" is "Why another concert" but, apparently, everyone else's is "Why is his concert on the same date as Pops' show (Dec.14)?"

Martin explains, quite candidly, and with a lot of humor, that his concert was confirmed a year before. It was Pops who moved her show all of a sudden to the 14th.

When Martin found out about it, he tried his best to move his performance date but it just wasn't possible. And so that's that. He's not trying to compete, he says. Neither is Pops. Things just worked out that way.

So, which show should we watch? Martin says graciously: watch either one—and adds mysteriously, you'll see both of them.

How's that possible? Martin won't tell, but given the magic of microwave, satellite feeds, telephone patches and whatnot, you can bet it'll be possible.

Gracious

Martin is always very gracious when he talks about his ex-wife. When asked what he thought about Pops going out with a younger man, he says, matter-of-factly, older, younger, he doesn't blame them, because his ex-wife's gorgeous. As long as they don't hurt her or use her.

He shares that Pops is one of only two women who still make him nervous. The other one is Donita Rose, who's always been a crush of his.

She's the kind of girl he'd love to flirt with, but can't. He admits to being a flirt—"I flirt with everyone! Even guys!" he jokes—but confesses he can't flirt with Donita or Pops. Hence the nerves.

And how's his love life? Martin says if you ask his girlfriend she'll probably say it's lousy because they're rarely together. He's just really busy these days.

Even Christmas is going to be busy for him—he's going to be Santa Claus, visiting several houses in one evening—his kids, his girlfriend, his father's place. In time, he'll be able to give a better answer to questions about his love life. When he's not so busy with his career.

He's been in the business 20 years now—but he says the first 16 years were training, his career really took off only four years ago.

He shudders at the mention of his movies—he had fun, but he *knows* he's not a good actor. He wonders how come when Jim Carrey does funny faces onscreen, people laugh—but when he did it, people thought he was retarded? He's joking again of course. This madman never stops.

Pure entertainment

His concert celebrates not only Christmas but also the 20 years of Martin's career. And now I think I know why people aren't sick of him: He *is* pure entertainment. He doesn't hide anything, and he can laugh at himself.

And he is, above all, sincere. People always come back for more of Martin because of that. And he sings well, too!

TWO FOR THE SHOW

The Company celebrates 17 years of music

By Mary Ann Bautista and Ricky T. Gallardo

TONIGHT, The CompanY is celebrating its 17th anniversary with "CompanY 17: Our Story So Far" at the UP Theater.

Moy Ortiz, the group's spokesperson, describes the concert as an "aural mosaic" which aims to showcase the group's musical versatility.

China Cojuangco's turn

It's Tingting Cojuangco's youngest daughter China who's hugging the limelight these days. She's starring in a special Christmas musical for the Ayala malls.

Cojuangco plays the Virgin Mary in "He Came Upon A Manger," a retelling of the classic Christmas story by Celeste Legaspi's daughter, Waya Gallardo. "I'm really being lured by musical theater. I guess, I've been really bitten by the stage bug," China tells us.

Sharing the spotlight are Lee Robin Salazar as Joseph and Jeffrey Quizon as the Angel. Ryan Cayabyab sets to music the lyrics of Edith Gallardo and Moy Ortiz.

Sex Bomb Girls on winning streak

After serving as backdrop for the main hosts of "Eat Bulaga," the Sex Bomb Girls are now on a roll at centerstage. Their debut album has reached platinum and they have just released their Christmas CD, "Wish Ko sa Pasko."

After the girls struck gold with their debut single "Bakit Papa," Lily Monteverde of Regal Films turned them into movie stars. Their debut film, also titled "Bakit Papa," will be shown this week.

Experience My Cinema

There's no stopping the Ayala malls from giving patrons the ultimate in entertainment. We were recently invited to experience "My Cinema," the country's one and only private movie theater (for private functions) with its own cocktail and lounge area.

My Cinema offers 50 luxurious seats and a state-of-the-art Dolby EX sound. Check it out.

No small roles for Mylene Dizon

She may be a *contravida* on television, but Mylene Dizon says she doesn't mind playing small roles." "A real actor is not afraid to take on small roles because he knows he can make it big," she says.

Dizon is a member of the chorus of "The Rocky Horror Show"—her first musical-theater role, and she's proud of her participation.

The show is on its last two weekends at the RCBC Theater in Makati.

7th anniversary

It was one livewire journey with the Mulatto at the Music Museum when the country's premiere soul band recently celebrated their 7th anniversary.

The showband regaled the crowd with a repertoire which included the big hits of the soul icons of the '70s. We got swept off our feet by their version of "Georgia," their "Three Decades of Soul" medley, and the exceptional rock-and-soul arrangement of "The Bohemian Rhapsody."

The show ended on a high note when Mulatto rendered a 30-minute non-stop dance medley that kept everyone on his feet.

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'8 Mile' shows Eminem can act

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—Say what you will about Eminem—that he's a misogynist and a homophobe, that his profane, violent rhymes taint the young minds of his fervent followers.

EMINEM. Beyond shock value.

Charisma

The man has undeniable charisma, so it comes as no surprise that he proves he can act in "8 Mile," his film debut.

After all, Slim Shady—or whatever he calls himself when he raps about killing his ex-wife and stuffing her body in a trunk—is nothing but an act, a side show for shock value.

What does come as a surprise is the softer side of Marshall Mathers III—that beneath the bravado, there is vulnerability. He wasn't afraid to turn himself into a sympathetic figure, and by doing so, he's turned himself into a movie star.

True, "8 Mile" pretty much follows Eminem's life story: He stars as Jimmy Smith Jr.—"Rabbit" to his friends—a white kid from a poor black neighborhood in Detroit who immerses himself in rap culture as an escape from his alcoholic mother and dead-end factory job.

Rabbit hangs out with his childhood friends, falls for a wannabe model named Alex (Brittany Murphy), and hones his skills, hoping to snag a recording deal that will take him far from the decrepitude of the city's 8 Mile Road.

Magnetic

But as Mariah Carey infamously proved last year with "Glitter," not all pop stars are comfortable standing in front of a camera and playing thinly veiled versions of themselves. Where Carey was stiff and self-conscious, Eminem is positively magnetic.

It certainly doesn't hurt that he has Curtis Hanson on his side. The "L.A. Confidential" director found the perfect balance between giving Eminem room to swagger and reining in the rapper's rage. The result: It's as if Eminem isn't even acting.

Hanson's stylistic approach to "8 Mile" is just as natural; it's so raw, it's practically a Dogma 95 film. With cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto ("Amores Perros"), he's stripped down the images to grainy grays and blues, bathed them in natural light and shot them mostly with hand-held cameras. The look enhances Eminem's innate immediacy, with his steely blue eyes and no-nonsense lyrics.

The power of his performance is enough to make you forgive the fact that "8 Mile" is essentially a rap version of "The Karate Kid," with Eminem in the Ralph Macchio role. Mekhi Phifer is his Mr. Miyagi, and a bunch of rich rappers who cruise around Detroit in a plush SUV fill in for the dreaded Cobra Kai karate students.

So we know that, after coming up lame in his first rap battle against his rivals, Rabbit must return to the same stage at the end to emerge victorious. There's so much noise and fun and energy to the climax, though, it doesn't matter that we saw it coming from the opening credits.

Small twists

Despite the predictable formula, screenwriter Scott Silver wisely avoids taking the easy route every time; there are several small twists you may not expect, and the ending isn't entirely a happy one.

If there is a weak link, it's Kim Basinger as Rabbit's mother. Hanson worked wonders with Basinger in "L.A. Confidential," the film that earned her a supporting-actress Oscar; here, she's singularly shrill and selfish.

Murphy is a joy to watch, though, as she has been consistently in scene-stealing supporting roles from "Clueless" to "Riding in Cars With Boys."

But to paraphrase an Eminem song, it would feel so empty without him. Thankfully, since he's in practically every frame of the movie, we never have to know what that's like.

"8 Mile," a Universal Films release, runs 111 minutes. Three stars out of four. *AP*

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‘The Grey Zone’ features anguished performances

By David Germain

LOS ANGELES—Horrifying as are the images of Jews gassed and incinerated in Tim Blake Nelson's Holocaust nightmare "The Grey Zone," the characters' matter-of-factness is almost as unnerving.

Full knowledge

Without a particle of sentiment or Hollywood heroism, the movie presents Jews and Nazis in full knowledge of their coming death throes, who go about the business of surviving another day even as they ask the most agonizing moral question: What would you do for a little more life?

Viewers need to know what they're getting into with "The Grey Zone." In some ways, it's more wrenching than "Schindler's List," which offered the flicker of small hopes and noble sacrifice amid colossal tragedy.

The only hope in "The Grey Zone" is false hope. The only sacrifice comes when all choices, all directions, are equally abhorrent.

Writer-director Nelson, best known as George Clooney and John Turturro's escapee pal in "O Brother, Where Art Thou?", adapted "The Grey Zone" from his play about the Sonderkommandos, Jews who ushered other inmates to Nazi gas chambers, then cleared out the bodies and fed them to the ovens.

Special privileges

For their work, the Sonderkommandos gained special privileges—caviar and smoked oysters, tobacco and alcohol, better living quarters. After about four months, the Nazis would kill the Sonderkommandos and train new ones.

"The Grey Zone" is set at Auschwitz, where Sonderkommandos rebelled in October 1944 and destroyed crematorium ovens with gunpowder smuggled in by Jewish women working at a nearby munitions plant.

The movie offers anguished performances from actors far afield of their usual bearings, among them Mira Sorvino, Steve Buscemi and David Arquette.

Harvey Keitel, an executive producer on "The Grey Zone," co-stars as a Nazi crematorium overseer, driven to severe headaches and heavy drinking by the slaughter around him, yet fatalistically proclaims the Nazis will dispose of as many Jews as possible before the Allies "do it to us." *AP*

KEITEL. His latest starrer is "more wrenching than 'Schindler's List.'"

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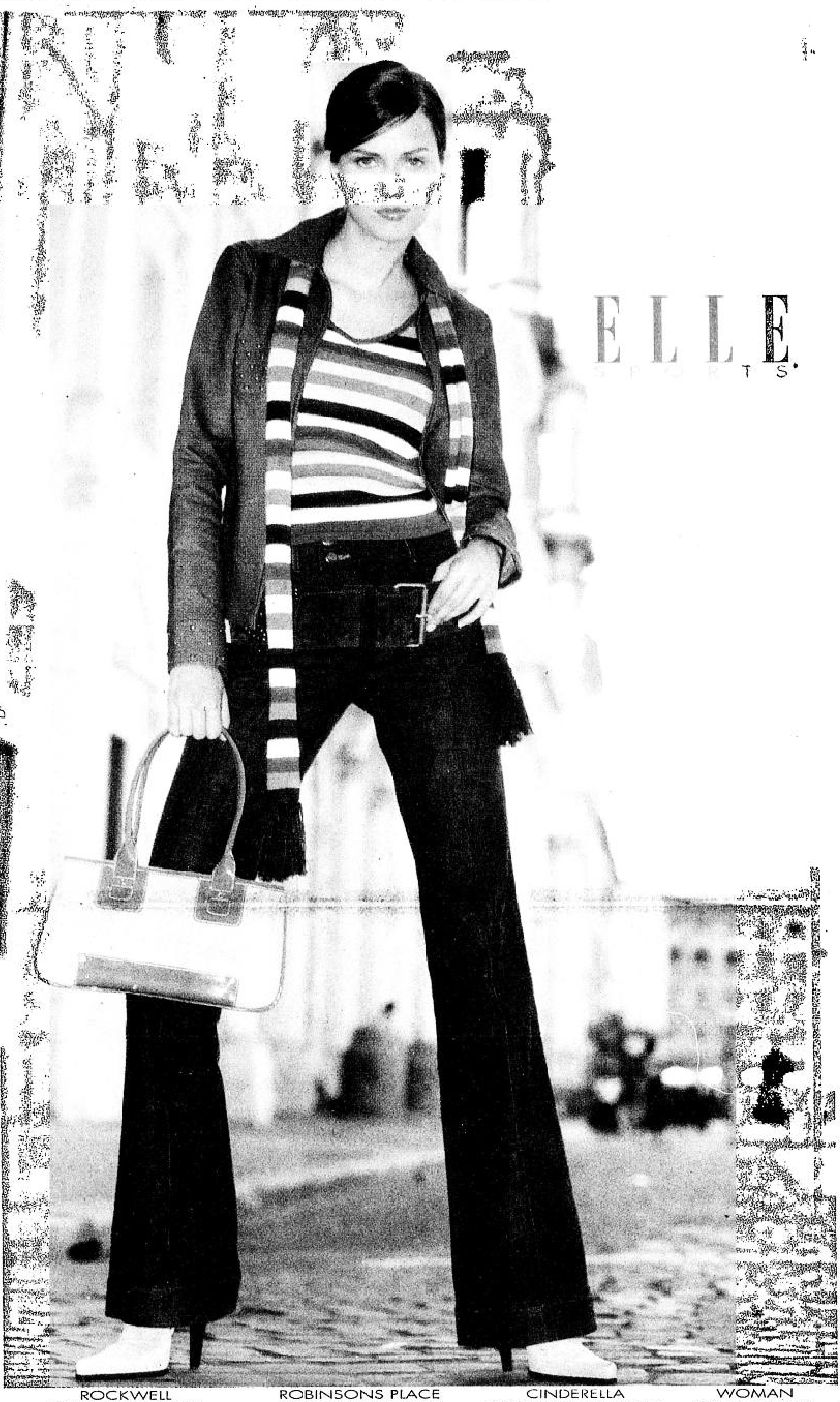

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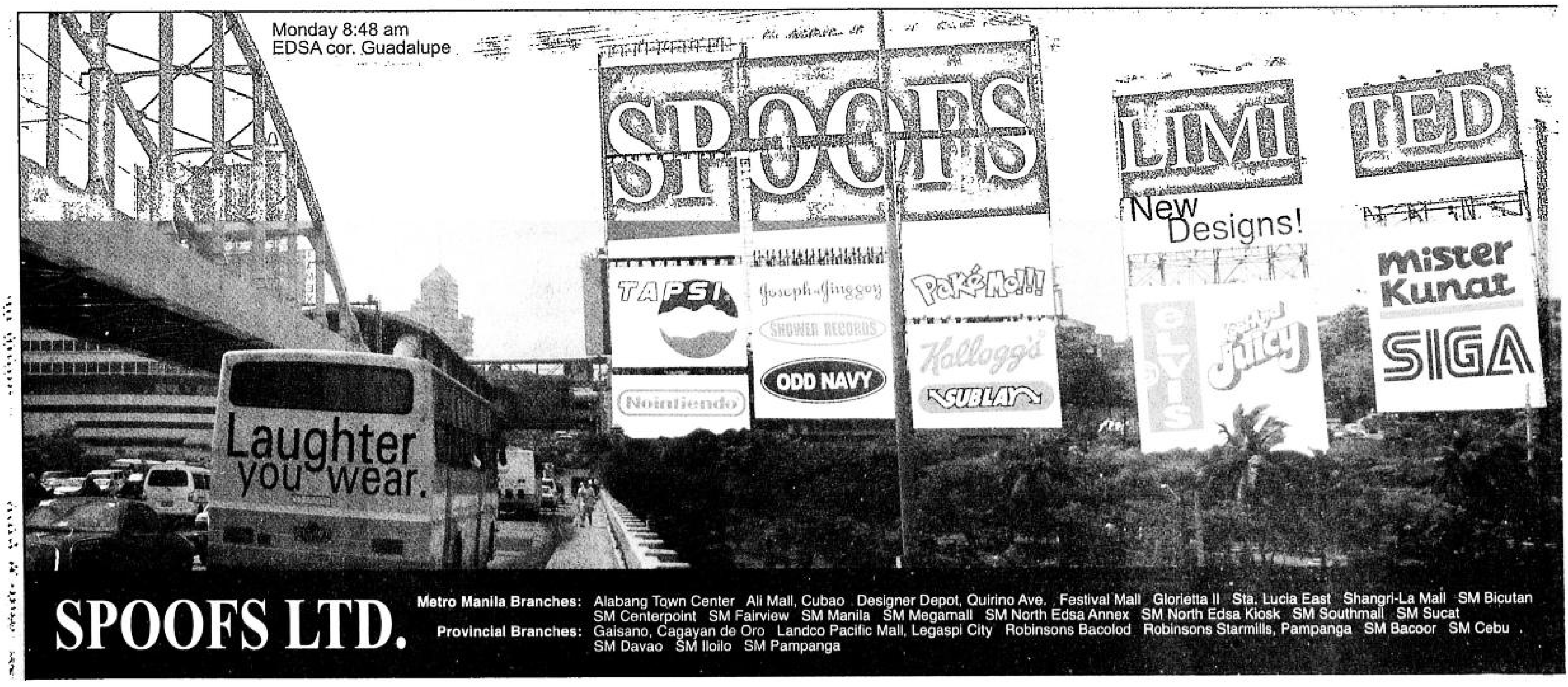

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SATURDAY Special

'The Quiet American' showcases Michael Caine at the peak of his thespic powers

By Matt Wolf

LONDON—"The Quiet American" is the first film that Michael Caine shot after winning his second Academy Award in March 2000 for "The Cider House Rules."

CAINE. Plays one of Graham Greene's most sadonic characters. AP

And with its belated release scheduled for a two-week run to position Caine in the Oscar sweepstakes again, the actor should be in the hunt with his performance as one of Graham Greene's most sardonic characters. (After its brief New York and Los Angeles stint, the movie is set for wider rerelease in January to capitalize on hoped-for awards momentum.)

Caine has trawled the intrigue-laden, war-torn world of Greene before, starring opposite Richard Gere two decades ago in "The Honorary Consul."

Title role

In "The Quiet American," written by Robert Schenkkan and Christopher Hampton, the title role is given to Brendan Fraser, playing American aid worker Alden Pyle, whose arrival in 1952 Saigon weaves a typical Greene skein of desire and deception.

But it's Caine's weary, seen-it-all Thomas Fowler, a London Times journalist with the word "hack" etched in every pore, who gives Phillip Noyce's screen adaptation such a kick. His face creased with experience, hair shorn almost to a crew cut, Caine is every bit the image of a man whose ravages come to mirror those of Southeast Asia itself.

Blunt critique

The film offers a blunt cri-

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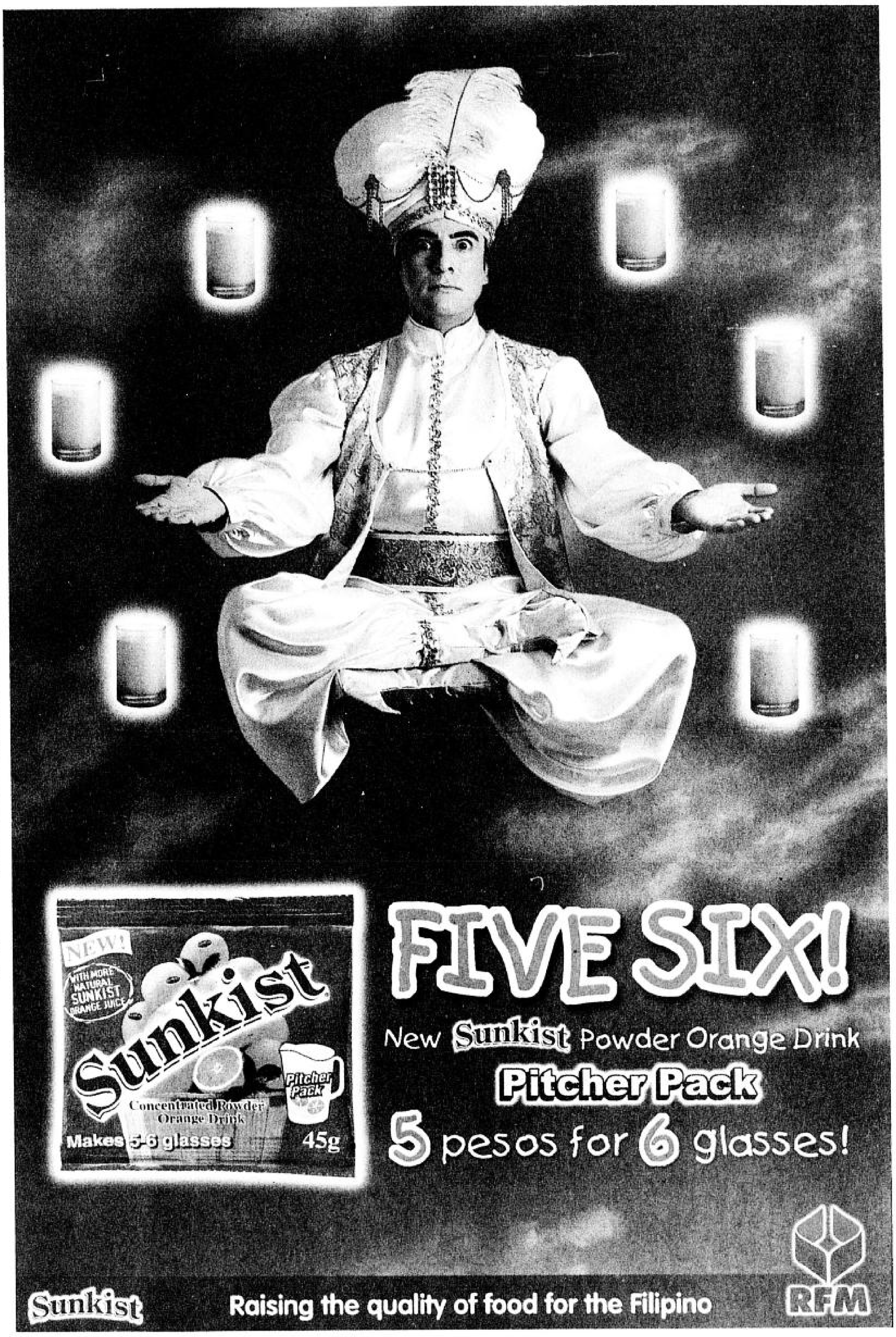

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SMART
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Councilor Lou brightens a little corner of Manila

By Nestor U. Torre

WE'VE known Lou Veloso as an actor ever since we performed together with Imee Marcos in the Filipino translation of Goldoni's "Mirandolina," directed by Tony Espejo. After that production, Lou enjoyed some success on TV when he created the comic character of "Mr. Truman," which continues to be associated with him to this day.

Politics

When we heard that Lou was running for councilor in Manila, we thought that he had overreached his mark. After all, it took money to go into politics, and that was something he didn't have. But he ran, anyway—and won.

Later, he told us how he did it: instead of dispensing cash to ingratiate himself with viewers, he went on a house-to-house campaign of the city's sixth district. Unlike other political candidates who adopted the economical strategy, however, he didn't rush through his visits, he dawdled.

He really tried to get to know the people living in his district, what they were worried about, what they needed. Disarmed by his genuine interest, they voted him into office.

Constituents

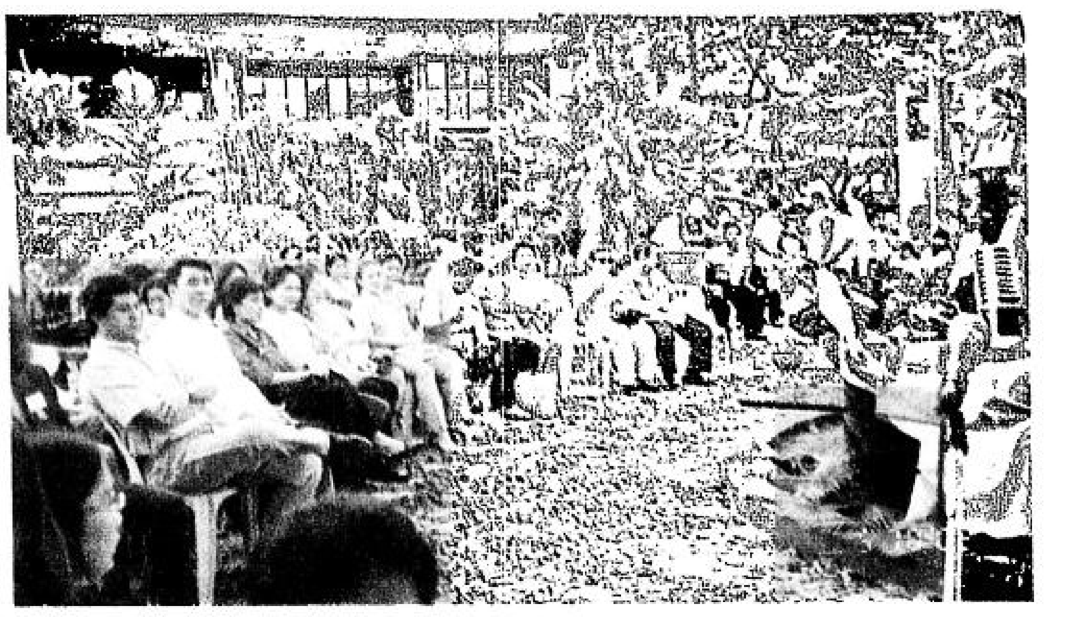
At first, Lou didn't feel all that confident about doing justice to the more official functions of his office. In fact, he asked us for some pointers in this regard. Even better, however, he realized that, as long as he acted from the heart and did his homework, he would be able to truly serve his constituents.

True enough, when he ran for reelection, Councilor Luciano "Lou" Veloso topped the polls. Feeling affirmed, Lou added to his already heavy workload by thinking up ways to encourage the flowering of culture and the arts in his corner of the "soul-less" urban jungle.

Logic

His logic: since he was an artist *and* a councilor, he could move more confidently in this area than most other politicians who didn't think it was all that important. As an artist, he knew it was; and as a politician, he knew what could be done to actualize his cultural projects.

VELOSO. Thinking up ways to encourage the flowering of culture and the arts.



GUESTS of honor at the park's inauguration include officials of the City of Manila and some cultural leaders.

With the help of other like-minded city leaders like Mayor Lito Atienza (who used to be with the Bayanihan Dance Company), Lou first put up the Sta. Ana Arts Center. The compact complex has a theater, an art gallery and spaces for workshops and other arts initiatives.

Next, Lou set his sights on the small rotunda on Syquia st., near the Sta. Ana public market. Realizing that city folks needed pocket parks to be able to relax, exercise and *breathe*, Lou decided to turn the nondescript rotunda into an urban haven that, small though it was, would make a positive difference in the lives of the people in the neighborhood.

As he worked to turn his latest dream into reality, however, Lou realized that this would have to be pretty much his own effort. While many people promised to help, only a few fulfilled their pledges.

Inauguration

But, earlier this year, the project was finally completed and the rotunda, now named the Philippine-Thailand Friendship Circle, was inaugurated. Officials and residents who graced the inauguration were blown away by the circular park's transformation.

The circle now includes a 10-foot waterfall, a *bahay kubo*, an orchidarium, a Phil-Thai monument, statues, a performance space, a bonsai garden, and greenery galore.

The circle was blessed by Rev. Allan Arcebuche, Arnold "Ali" Atienza read his father Mayor Lito Atienza's message, Thai Ambassador Busba Bunnag spoke, and Rep. Mark Jimenez pledged continued support.

Also gracing the occasion were Engr. Ose Dion Diaz, Councilor Don Bagatsing, Atty. Emmanuel Sison, CCP chair Baltazar Endriga, Nina Lim-Yuson, Romulo Bernardo, Dr. Ofelia Carague, Fina Yonzon and Fidel Sarmiento.

After the inauguration, it was the residents' turn to celebrate the completion of the new park—by making full, delighted use of it. As they chatted, exercised, surveyed the greenery and waterfall, or just passed the time in the now gracious surroundings, it was clear that Councilor Lou's determined efforts to brighten a small corner of their lives had borne wonderful fruit.

> Lou decided to turn the nondescript rotunda into an urban haven

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New Voice celebrates 16 days of cultural activism through theater

By Monique Wilson

ARGENTINIAN political playwright Augosto Boal says, "Theatre is necessarily political, because all activities of man are political, and theatre is one of them".

Similar vision

The New Voice Company has lived by a similar vision—to create and produce theater that informs, educates, enlightens, awakens, inspires and incites to action.

On Nov. 30, the company will be staging a theatre concert, "Revolutionary Hearts," to celebrate 16 Days of Activism. They include the International Day For the Elimination of Violence Against Women, World AIDS Day (Dec. 1) and International Human Rights Day (Dec. 10).

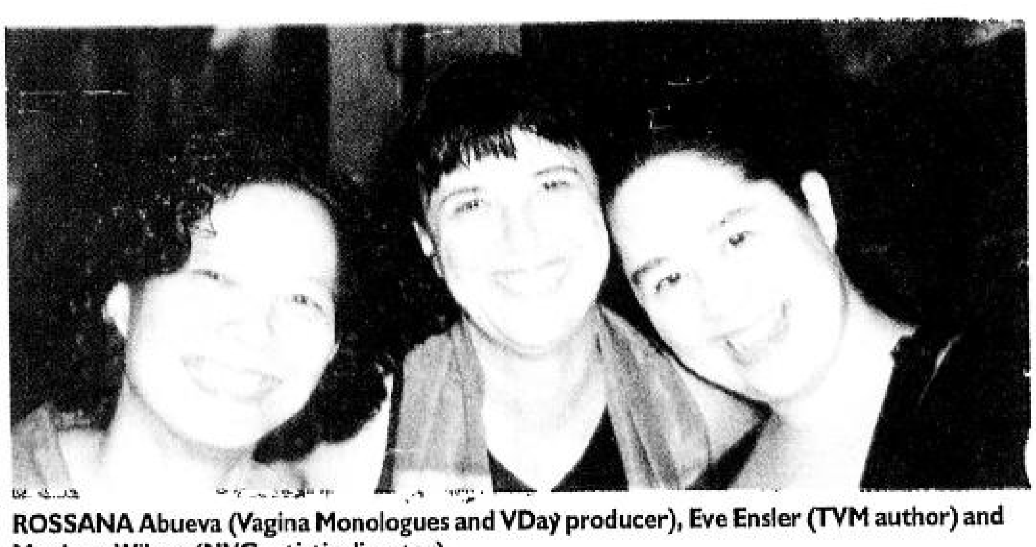
The concert highlights these international celebrations through a unique combination of text, theatrical staging and concert music.

The show explores national issues in the context of violence against women, AIDS and human rights, and how these currently affect Filipinos people today. The concert is told through the eyes of the Filipino youth and deals with the issues of poverty, migration, equality, freedom, and women's and children's rights and justice.

Artists

Artists of the New Voice resident company workshopped the show with members of the Gabriela women's group and the Kaibigan Drop-In Center for Streetchildren when it was first staged last year. The groups gave valuable insights into understanding the issues behind the 16 Days of Activism celebrations.

"Revolutionary Hearts" goes onstage at the Music Museum on Nov. 30 at 7:15 p.m. before the 9 p.m. final performance of "The Vagina Monologues" in Filipino. The show features Elnard Arellano, Rito Asilo, Denise Bontogon, April Celmar, Lara De Jesus, Danielle Espino, Rabbi Gannaban, Jenny Jamora, Hannah Reyes, Oliver Rodriguez, Rona Lou San Pedro and Nikki Ventosa. Call 896-6695.



ROSSANA Abueva (Vagina Monologues and VDay producer), Eve Ensler (TVM author) and Monique Wilson (NVC artistic director).

'The Quiet American' showcases Michael Caine at the peak . . .

From page D1

Director Noyce is far truer to Greene's morally ambiguous spirit than Joseph L. Mankiewicz was in his 1958 movie

tique of American interventionism overseas: The deceptively bland and affable Fraser eventually is revealed as a CIA operative whose actions lead to the murder of dozens of innocent Vietnamese.

At a time when the United States is once again poised for war, this might not seem the right moment for a film that dares to question US presence abroad (and a final image leaves no doubt as to where Noyce, the movie's Australian director, stands on the issue).

But perhaps there couldn't be a better moment for so shrewd a treatment not just of shifting political allegiances but personal ones, too. After all, Greene being Greene, politics aren't all that come between Pyle and Fowler. The film's sexual catalyst is the young Vietnamese beauty, Phuong (Do Thi Hai Yen), a woman less than half Fowler's age, who moves from Fowler's bed to Pyle's and might be persuaded back—if events can be made to conspire with Fowler's wish to avoid a lonely old age.

Those who don't know Greene's 1955 novel should discover the rest of the narrative for themselves. And they can be secure in the fact that Noyce, who between this and "Rabbit-Proof Fence" seems to be having a particularly good year, is far truer to the morally ambiguous spirit of Greene than Joseph L. Mankiewicz was in his 1958 movie of the same book.

Camerawork

For one thing, there's the camerawork of Christopher Doyle, who also served as cinematographer for "Rabbit-Proof Fence." For "The Quiet American," he captures the Gallic splendor of Saigon during that none too quiet period before the one-time colonial outpost would go on to be rent asunder by war. (Noyce's film spent five weeks shooting on location in Vietnam.)

But most of all, there's Caine, his mouth downturned, the actor's vaunted charm intentionally subdued. (London, he says by way of explaining his residence abroad, is fine "just where it is"—especially since the city is synonymous with a failed marriage that he is trying without much success to end.) *AP*

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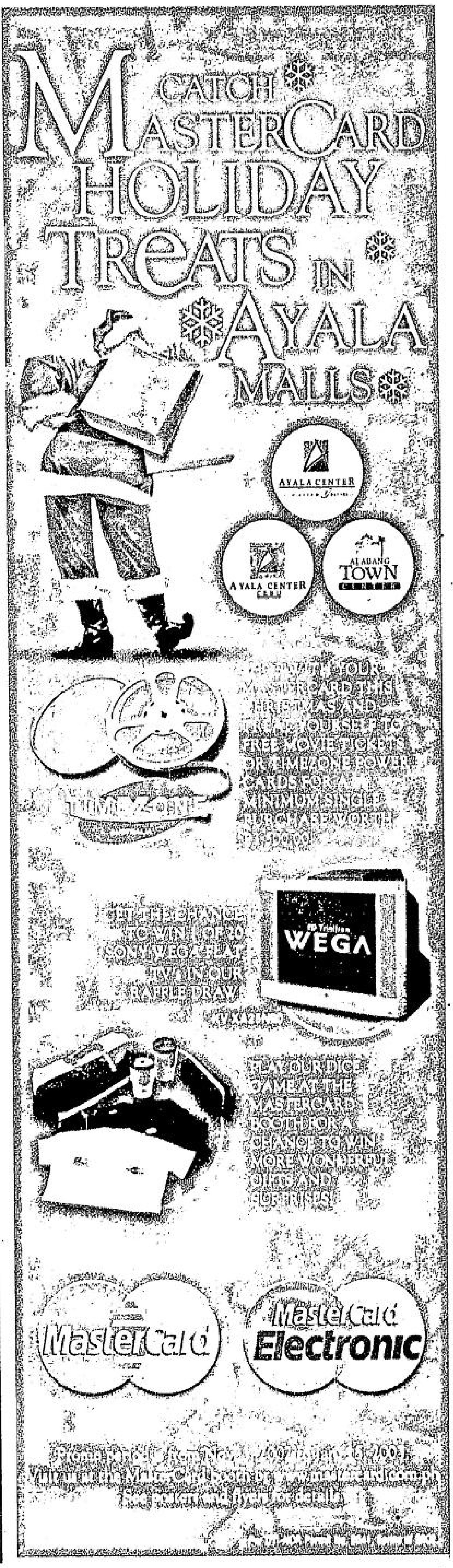

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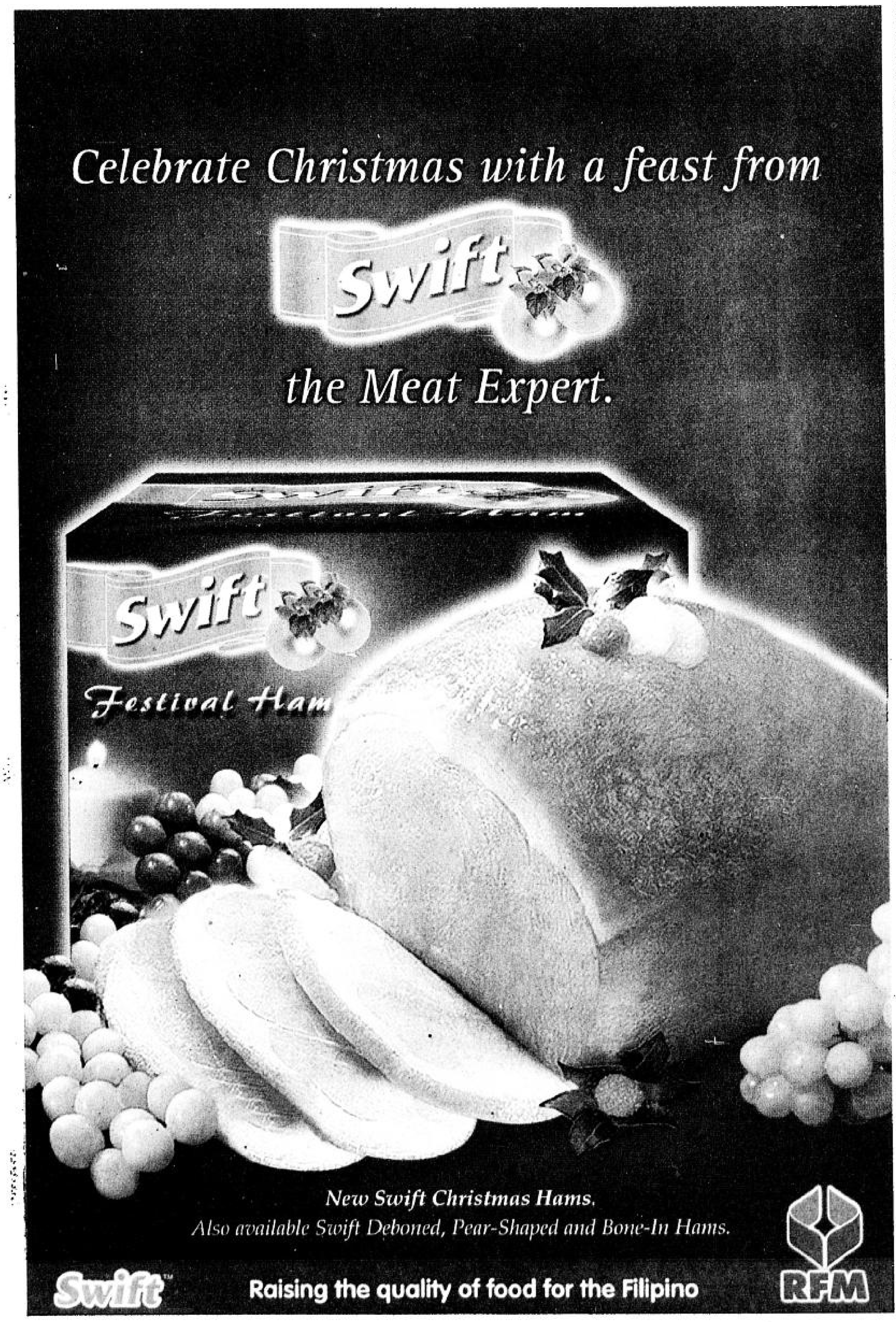

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Halle Berry steals James Bond's show as Jinx

By Nestor U. Torre

AS we expected, Halle Berry is making such a strong impression as a Bond Girl in the latest 007 saga, "Die Another Day," that, in the opinion of some reviewers, she's upstaging James Bond himself!

Undercover agent

As Jinx, an undercover agent for the United States, Berry has expanded the traditional participation of the typical Bond Girl:

In past 007 capers, the Bond Girls have been limited to providing visual oomph, proof positive that Bond is great in bed, and doing the occasional villain turn to confirm viewers' suspicion that "beautiful women can't be trusted."

Well, while Berry is sexy enough to take care of business as usual, she wants to do more than just those cliche routines, and—knowing a good thing when it sees it—the production has given her every opportunity to strut her more dynamic stuff.

Basically, Berry has, all by her lonesome, zapped the old notion of the lovely but defenseless woman, who's forever begging for Bond to protect her. *This* Bond Girl is fully prepared to protect herself, thank you—and to launch her own attacks, as well!

Plot

In "Die Another Day," Bond gets wind of a high-level plot to use a cache of diamonds to pay for weapons to be used by North Korea, and he is captured and tortured for his pains. Unlike his previous film outings, the world's top spy can't get out of this one, and, much to his humiliation, is stripped of his license to kill.

BERRY. May soon be launched on her own as an action heroine.

Determined to prove that he isn't over-the-hill, Bond makes use of his contacts in the criminal world to foil yet another super-nemesis' plot to take over the world.

The job proves to be too much for one man, even if he *is* James Bond. So this is where Jinx makes her presence felt— no, not to tremble kittenishly by his side, but to join him in kicking some serious ass!

Feisty partner

Yes, Bond now has a feisty partner fighting along with him, and she happens to be a great-looking woman, Will the super-machos in the audience get over this new development? Well, they'll just have to. It's a sign of the times.

Movies like "Lara Croft, Tomb Raider" and "Charlie's Angels" have already introduced the concept of beautiful women as action heroes, so Halle Berry is simply providing the incipient movement with its early apotheosis.

And Jinx is definitely not going away. There's talk that the next Bond saga will feature her anew, and her participation will be even more at par with Bond's.

Action heroine

Even better, some savvy producers want to launch Jinx on her own as an action heroine, without having to wait for the now 49-year-old Bond (that's Pierce Brosnan's age) to catch up with her.

From James Bond to Jinx is quite a quantum leap on the spy-action-adventure film scene, but the time is right for it. For one thing, more women now watch action movies, so they'd be even more thrilled to view films with a woman put in charge of the butt-kicking. That's—progress!

AiAi de las Alas performs at Le Pavillion

By Edmund L. Sicam

AIAI de las Alas is *really* happy these days. Why, you may ask?

Well, after having a very successful concert at the Araneta just a few months ago, she's going to have another concert, "Ai Ai…Whattawoman" on Dec. 7 at 8:30 p.m. at the Le Pavillion, Roxas blvd.

Different songs

It's more or less the same format as the last concert, she says, but there will be different songs. Rannie Raymundo is a guest, and a choir will back her up in one song, she says—a new Christmas song "*na pang-anghel. Anghel sa lupa*."

AiAi describes her upcoming concert as "*hindi naman* ordinary." Is there anything rated R this time? "*Kung ano yung dati kong* show, *yun na yun . . . pero bawal ang bata. Kasi pag* live, *mahirap mag*-perform *pag may bata*."

Secondly, her movie, "Tanging Ina," is finally done. She says it's a dramedy, rather than purely a comedy. This is her first lead role. She plays a woman with many children, all with different fathers, played by handsome, matinee-idol types like Edu Manzano and Tonton Gutierrez.

Third, "Financially, successful *ako. Pero mukha lang akong mayaman kasi araw-araw ako nakikita sa* TV. *Pero* five years ago *pa lang lumaki ang* talent fee *ko*."

Jaguar

This woman's got something a lot of guys envy: she drives no less than a Jaguar. Unfortunately, this causes a bit of a problem for her.

She describes how some young guys approach her: "*Mga, alam mo,* Ai, *ang* sexy *mo. O, alam mo* Ai, *ang ganda mo pala* in person." To which she replies happily, "*Talaga, ganun…* thank you." But then, "*Tapos bigla, 'Balita ko may* Jaguar *ka, pasakay naman.' Ang pangit*."

She takes the joke further: "*Gusto nila, doble sakay.* Jaguar *tsaka tao. E siyempre kakapagod yun, ano? Pwede isahan na lang?*" She laughs her signature laugh.

AiAi is also happy about her kids, they're her pride and joy. But she's too tired sometimes to spend enough time with them. She narrates, "*Sa* 'Harry Potter,' *nanood kami, tulog ako sa sine. Naiintindihan naman nila*."

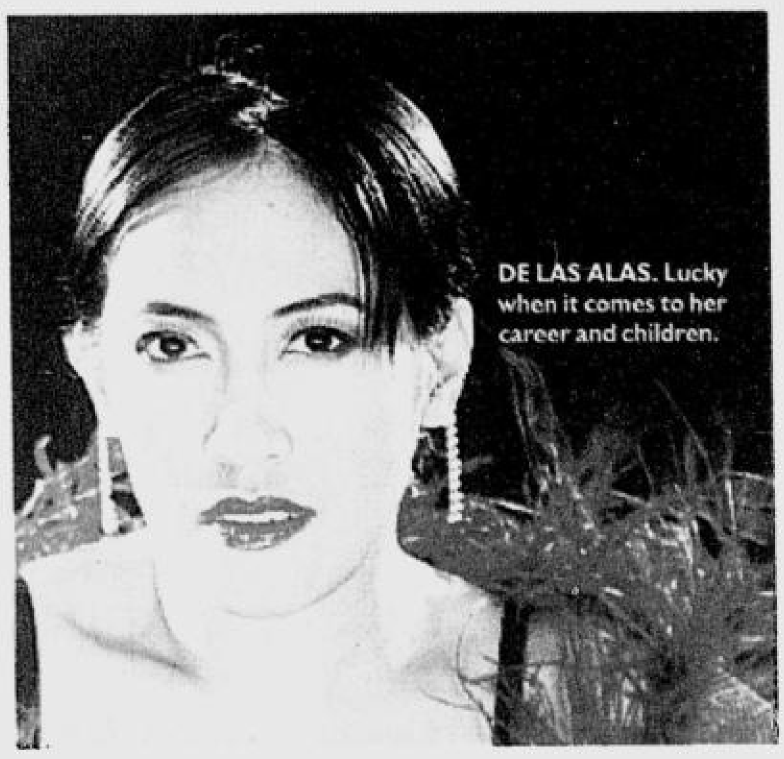
Are they independent, more or less? "*Opo. At nasanay na sila na wala ako. Malungkot, pero alam naman nila na suportado ko sila*."

AiAi concludes thoughtfully, "In fairness, *masuwerte ako sa* career *at sa anak. Sa* love life, *diyan ako parating paltos*."

Love life

In spite of that statement, AiAi has a fifth thing to be happy about. "*Masaya na ako. May nagmamahal na sa akin*." Who, we press her? "*Mga* fans." She laughs. "*Ang Diyos*." She then says that her priorities are "*Ang pamilya ko, ang mga anak ko, at* love life *ko*."

We ask, "*Sino si* Honey?" AiAi answers as only she can: "*Hindi ko siya kilala pero katabi ko siya matulog*." She laughs again.


DE LAS ALAS. Lucky when it comes to her career and children.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Asteroid as big as soccer field narrowly misses Earth
GMA, Bush rejoice; former hostages heave sigh of relief

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference.

Dante Balboa makes the grade

By Remy M. Umerez

PRODUCER Robbie Tan has signed 22-year-old model Dante Balboa to a three-year contract. He is introduced in "Kasiping," a sex comedy where he shares equal billing with Diana Zubiri, Halina Perez and Rodel Velayo.

Attitude

More than Dante's good looks and fine physique convinced Robbie to immediately cast him in a project. He liked Dante's attitude toward his work and his plans in life. He went through a series of auditions which he passed with flying colors.

The first audition required Dante to write an essay about himself. Robbie thought it spoke well of his true character. Next, Dante was asked to walk around a crowded place in Libis while Robbie observed whether passers-by would give Dante a second look. They did, and that was good enough for Robbie.

During a story conference, Dante was asked to explain what he thought of his character. The point was for Dante to fully absorb the part he was playing.

All this was new to Dante, who declared, "*Ibang klase pala kung mag*-audition *ang* Seiko. *Ang akala ko'y titingnan lang kung malinis ang aking katawan*."

Husband

In "Kasiping," Dante plays the happy-go-lucky husband of Halina Perez who is seduced by a liberated parlor attendant (Diana Zubiri).

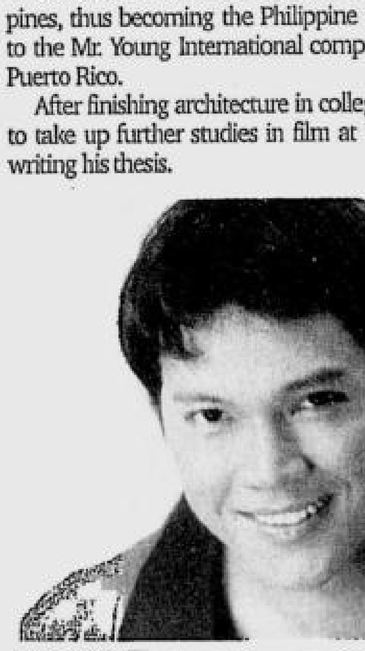
How far is he willing to go in bold movies? "Whatever is really necessary. *Basta ba* hygienically prepared *kami ng* partner *ko*," he says.

On his first shooting day, Dante was surprised to find out he had to take a shower several times. Director Augusto Salvador wanted to shoot all his shower scenes in the movies in one day.

"I had two shower scenes in the picture *na kinunan ng maraming beses para may pagpilian* for the final print. It was difficult for me because, how many times can you take a shower in a day?," Dante laughs.

Dante is a print and ramp model. He has joined male contests and won the title of Mr. Young Philippines, thus becoming the Philippine representative to the Mr. Young International competition held in Puerto Rico.

After finishing architecture in college, he decided to take up further studies in film at UP. He is now writing his thesis.


BALBOA. Three-year contract.

'Journey of Man' airs on NGC

By Edmund L. Sicam

"DO you know that we are all Africans, brothers and sisters, separated by a mere 2,000 years?"

Teaser

That's the provocative teaser for 'Journey of Man," a National Geographic Channel presentation airing on Dec. 15 at 9 p.m. The two-hour special is based on the findings of a geneticist, Dr. Spencer Wells, who spent six months collecting blood samples from 2,000 people all over the world.

'Blood is one of the world's most evocative substances,' says the doctor. "To many people, it represents the essence of life, a religious sacrament—a gift from the gods.

"But to me, it embodies the past. Because inside this tiny crimson drop is the greatest history book ever written. It's the story of a journey; the journey of our species, and each of us is carrying a unique chapter."

Dr. Wells' conclusion after six months of DNA analysis: "Everyone alive today was a recent direct descendant of the first human group to people the world from our species' original home, Africa."

Furthermore, he says, our ancestors moved to Central Asia from Africa and settled there for 10,000 years. The human race multiplied for thousands of years before their descendants went on to populate the rest of the world. "Not so long ago, our species numbered a little more than 10,000. Now, there are some six billion people spread across our planet," says Dr. Wells.

Two weeks ago, the National Geographic Channel invited a group of Asian journalists to meet Dr. Wells at the Raffles Hotel in Singapore. I was fortunate enough to be part of this group, thanks to NGC-Asia's vice president for marketing, Pauline Goh and local publicist Lizza Nakpil.

Charisma

Before the group sat down with Dr. Wells, we watched excerpts from the show which he hosted. I was impressed by the geneticist's remarkable performance on screen. It helped of course that the topic he was discussing was controversial but for the most part, it was his charisma that caught my attention.

When I finally meet him, I feel like I can tease him: "Dr. Wells, you don't look like a scientist at all. You look more like a rock star." He is obviously unprepared for my remark and he bursts out laughing. He actually blushes. "I'll take that as a compliment. If what you say is true, and I don't know if I believe you, it will convince some people that you don't have to be a nerd to study science."

WELLS. Collected blood samples from 2,000 people all over the world.

Asked why he chose the field of genetics, he replies, "When I was a child, I wanted to be a historian. I wanted to transport myself back in time. Living in the past excited me.

"I ended up studying science at the University of Texas. As I was about to finish my course, I realized I didn't want to study mechanistic biology—the way genetics works, how DNA replicates. Instead, I wanted to use genetics as a tool to study something about the past."

In 1989, he received a fellowship to work under the renowned evolutionary geneticist, Richard Lewontin at Harvard University. After completing his Ph.D., he went to Stanford to work with another scientific giant, Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza.

Detective work

Although his detective work involves examining the past, he is very much forward-looking. Since his work involves a lot of traveling, he's seen the diversity of people and places allover the world. But, he says, "We're losing a lot of that diversity because of globalization. Genetically, it's making us all very similar. Culturally, as well. We're losing a lot of the indigenous culture. Everything is happening so fast."

Dr. Wells hopes that "while recognizing that genetically we are all closely related to each other, we'll still cherish the cultural diversity that makes up the patchwork quilt of the tapestry of what makes us human."

SAN Bushmen, believed to be direct descendants of the first evolved homo sapiens.

He foresees that in the future it will be possible to determine which traits future human beings will carry.

"My daughter's generation is the last to be born genetically-blind. We cross our fingers and hope for the best. It will be possible in another 20 years for people to go for genetic testing."

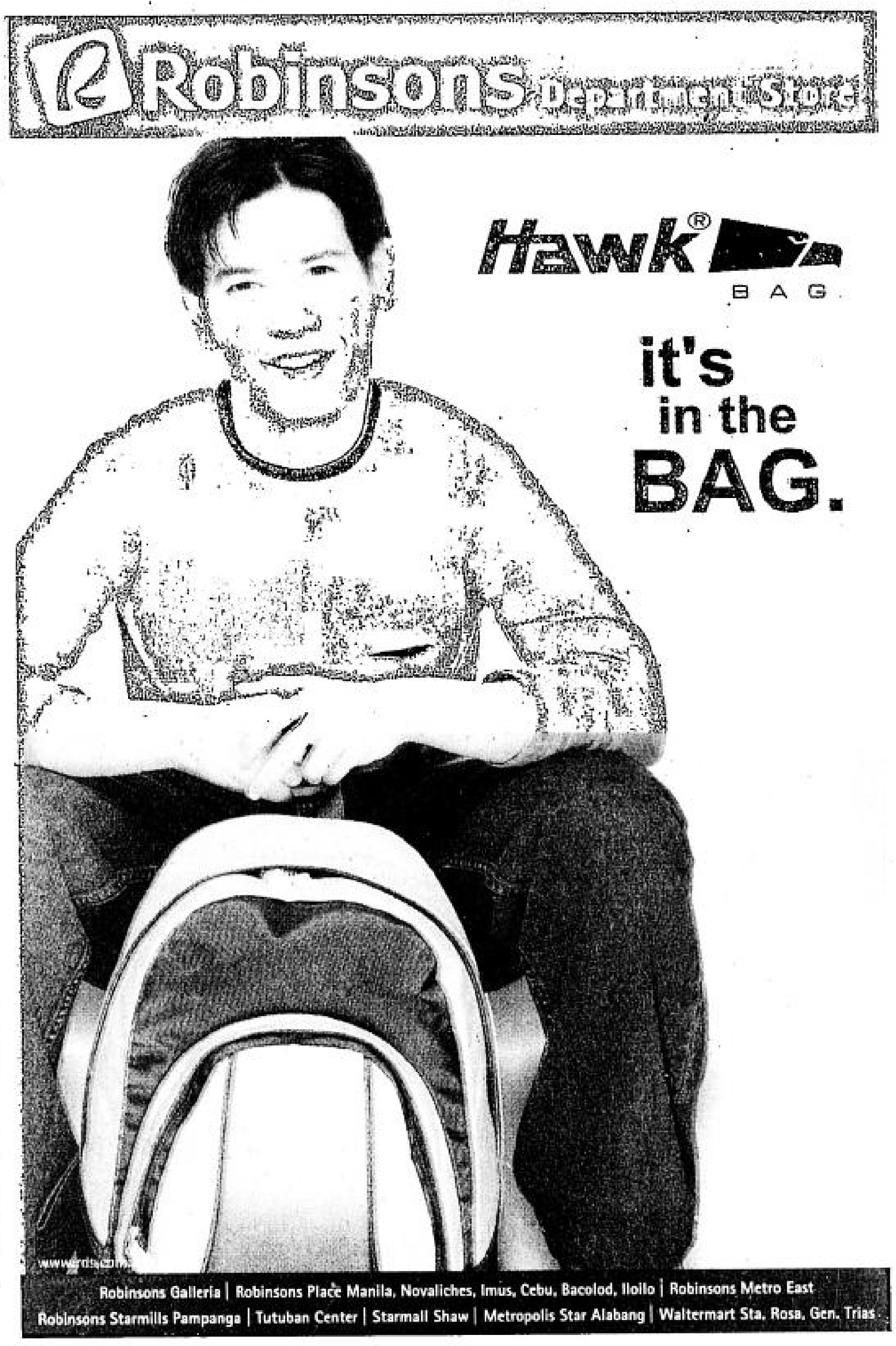
A super race may evolve, just like in the futuristic movie, "Gattaca." Dr. Wells warns against the repercussions of this development. "What worries me is mono-culture—everyone will be identical. What keeps a species healthy is diversity. The surest way to go extinct is to specialize so completely and be similar to each other. One disease comes in or the climate changes, and you're wiped out."

Abnormal behavior

We ask him about the discovery of genes predisposing a human being to certain abnormal behavior such as rape or murder. "Each behavior worth talking about is produced in part by genetics, but in large part by the environment. To use genetics as a crutch to escape from the consequences of your actions is not right. We don't have many things going for us—we don't have sharp teeth to hunt, we don't have fur to protect us from the cold, we can't fly.

"But we have a brain. It's an amazing tool. It probably evolved to allow us to hunt and run away from predators. We have culture and we're so much more than just genetic automatons going through the motions of life programmed into our genes. Instinct is not a big part of our behavior. It influences our behavior, but culture is much more important."

> 'Our brain is an amazing tool. We're so much more than just genetic automatons going through the motions of life programmed into our genes. Instinct influences our behavior, but culture is much more important'



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'Tuck Everlasting' is sweetly beautiful and dreamlike

Jay Russell's film deals with weighty issues like death and immortality

BLEDEL and Jackson in youthful frolic.

By Jocelyn Noveck

NEW YORK—With a mane of dark curls, bright blue eyes and the timeless look of Helena Bonham Carter mixed with the spunk of a young Judy Davis, Alexis Bledel is probably the best reason to see "Tuck Everlasting."

Reactions

As for the film itself, reactions should range from a few tears (probably exclusively from older females) to a few yawns (from the youngsters who presumably form much of the target audience).

After all, "Tuck Everlasting" deals with such weighty issues as death and immortality, or more precisely, which you would choose, if you could.

That probably isn't a question that keeps too many youngsters up at night. But while it's slow and ponderous at times, the film is sweetly beautiful and dreamlike, and those with the patience to submit to its low-energy charms may find their time well spent.

The film, directed by Jay Russell ("My Dog Skip"), is the second to be made of a Natalie Babbitt book (aimed at ages 9-12) about the Tuck family, who live in the woods and harbor a fascinating secret — a beautiful and a terrible one.

Secret

The secret is there to be discovered by Winnie Foster (Bledel, who plays the daughter on the WB's "Gilmore Girls")—a restless 15-year-old who's straining against the rigidity of her household, run by her stuffy but well-meaning parents, played by Amy Irving and Victor Garber.

The movie begins with a tease: a handsome young man—or more precisely, totally hot, as Jonathan Jackson (formerly of the soap "General Hospital") is likely to be described by the girls who see this film—arrives in a modern-day small town on a motorcycle. He's looking for something, but we don't know what.

Cut back to 1914, in the quaint town of Treegap. Winnie is the resident rich kid, and she's bored with staying home and playing the piano.

When her parents command her to attend boarding school, she rebels, running out into the forbidding woods that her family owns. There she comes across Jesse Tuck (Jackson)—the aforementioned good-looking guy, who's drinking from a spring at the bottom of a tree carved with a "T."

There's something secret about this spring, and soon Jesse's stern older brother (Scott Bairstow of the old Fox series "Party of Five") arrives to kidnap Winnie and take her home to their family, all to protect the secret.

It turns out this spring is the source of everlasting life. A century ago, the Tuck family drank from it, and now they are frozen in time, at the ages they first drank. They're also immune to illness and injury, and they can't be killed.

Restraint

Enter the Man in the Yellow Suit, played menacingly but with some restraint by Ben Kingsley. He's heard about the spring and is determined to find the Tucks, force them to reveal its whereabouts and exploit it. The Tucks fear that after all these years—17-year-old Jesse is actually a remarkably preserved centenarian—they're about to be uncovered.

In the meantime, as Winnie's frantic parents search for her, aided by the nefarious yellow-suited man, Winnie and Jesse frolic in the woods. These budding-love scenes would be unbearably corny if the two actors weren't charming, especially Bledel. It's hard not to smile as they take an impromptu romantic swim.

As the Tuck mother, Mae, Sissy Spacek is appropriately earthy and quirky. But William Hurt, as dad Angus, hasn't quite got his Scottish accent down.

Kingsley, though, who sports long, flowing hair here, is fun to watch—especially when a priest tells him he is "speaking blasphemy" and he tartly replies: "Fluently."

In the end, of course, Winnie will be forced to decide. Will she choose to take a drink from the spring and live eternally at age 15, with the dreamy Jesse? Or will she choose life—and its inevitable end—without him?

The answer is no surprise. Of course, we knew where this wholesome fantasy was going all along. But do we really mind?

"Tuck Everlasting," a Buena Vista release, runs 88 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

AP

Bong Revilla is proud of the special effects in 'Agimat'

By Edmund L. Sicam

'AGIMAT' is Imus Productions' entry to the Metro Manila filmfest, and it's got a lot to boast about. For one thing, it's the first time that three generations of Revilla men are all in one movie — Senator Ramon Revilla, Bong Revilla and Jolo Revilla. Another reason: the movie boasts of a full 10 minutes of special effects.

Narrates Bong, *"Ang habol natin dito ay ipakita natin na kayang gumawa ng* local films *ng ganitong klaseng pelikula. Makikita ninyo ang* three-dimension, *ang* CGI, *kung papano namin ginamit ang* motion-control camera... *yung mga* transformation *ng mga* characters..."

Quality

He says that out of the total P35 million peso budget, "More than P15 million *yung ginamit sa* special effects." Bong states proudly, *"Halos lahat ng gumagawa ng* commercial *sa* Makati, *nagtulong-tulong dito para mapaganda ang* special effects *at* sound *ng pelikula."*

Bong's last movie was "Kilabot at Kembot" with Assunta De Rossi, also for Imus. Would he do a movie for another movie outfit? *"Kasi pag* Imus, *mas naalagaan ako, e.* I have another project *sa* Viva with Rica Peralejo pero *inaayos pa namin yung* script. *Hindi na ganun kadali gumawa ng pelikula, e. Ang tao hindi mo na puwedeng lokohin.* They're after the story *na*, the quality of the movie.

Interesting characters

The characters in "Agimat" are interesting as well. Bong's character is the "Superhero *na lumalabas kay* Jolo every time he takes the *agimat*." Says Jolo of his character, *"Kung baga, ako si* Clark Kent, *si Papa si* Superman."

Mylene Dizon plays a *manananggal.* How was she convinced to play such an unglamorous role? *"Dali lang.* At this point in my career, *gusto ko talaga gumawa ng puro* characters. Things I haven't done before. *Nage-enjoy naman ako sa aking trabaho."* Nancy Castiglione surrenders her beauty to play a monster in the film. Says Nancy, "I was really interested in the role—it's different. I want to experience every kind of role right now, so it's okay with me that I needed prosthetics. I didn't like taking off the prosthetics, but it was okay."

No love scenes

Is Bong disappointed that he doesn't get to do any love scenes in this movie? "Once in a while *kailangan natin gumawa ng ganitong klaseng pelikula, pambata. Ito yung regalo, pamasko sa mga bata."*

What are this superhero's powers, exactly? "I can do anything. *May mga* weapons *akong ginagamit, iba-iba, sibat, chako,* bow and arrow." And his weakness is? *"Kapag nawala yung Agimat, si* Jolo *ang lalabas."*

Does Jolo believe in *agimat*? *"Sa tingin ko, wala. Kasi, yung nasa puso lang natin at umiiral sa utak natin, yun na yung pinaka-agimat natin."*

BONG plays a superhero.

How about Bong? *"Naniniwala ako. Kasi nakakita na ako nun, e. Pero ang agimat* is temporary. Once *hindi mo na kinain yung pinaka-agimat mo, puwede ka nang tablan ng bala. Nakakita na ako, ako mismo. Pero yung may agimat, pag sa ulo tinamaan, mamamatay."*

Can you use an *agimat* to charm women? *"Meron din ganun. Pero hindi ko na kailangan ng agimat,"* Bong says with a smile. *"Yung pinaka-agimat ko lang, yung mata ko!"*

THREE GENERATIONS. Jolo, Ramon and Bong Revilla.

'Frida' film criticized in Mexico

By Elizabeth Fullerton

MEXICO CITY— Frida Kahlo "would have walked out," Mexico's most famous society commentator said in a damning review of Hollywood's take on the cult Mexican painter, to be released in her homeland soon.

HAYEK. Star and producer.

Title role

Mexican actress Salma Hayek, who has the title role and also produced "Frida," has come home to promote the film before it opens nationally in Mexico.

But she may have a tough job winning over her compatriots, who are ambivalent about the United States at the best of times.

The few local critics who have seen the Miramax film have bristled at what they termed superficial portrayals of some of Mexico's most revered artists by foreigners speaking accented English.

Hayek, who lives in Los Angeles, depicts Kahlo's tortured life—her crippling street car accident, stormy 1929 marriage to the celebrated muralist Diego Rivera, affair with exiled Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, and death in 1954 at 47.

Muralist

Spanish-born Alfred Molina stars as Rivera and Spanish Hollywood heartthrob Antonio Banderas plays Rivera's Stalinist contemporary, muralist David Alfaro Siquieros.

"What (Frida) would have loathed with all her soul is to have heard herself speaking in English, not in Spanish," wrote society columnist Guadalupe Loaeza in the Reforma daily.

"Frida Kahlo hated gringos (Americans) and all that had to do with 'gringolandia,'" she added, using a pejorative that Mexicans use to evoke US capitalist excess.

Hayek, whose films include "Desperado" and "Wild Wild West," says "Frida" could not have been made in Spanish.

"The money the film was made with is American. To be able to recoup that, the film had to be in English . . . but Frida's art is for everyone. It's a language that transcends divisions and the film is very visual," Hayek said at a news conference in which she became visibly annoyed by criticism of the film.

Director Julie Taymor agreed: "This is an international film. It is a love letter to Mexico from everyone in it."

The film's gala Mexican premiere—attended by a who's who of artists, intellectuals and politicians—might well have offended Kahlo's communist sensibilities.

Mariachis

Few can argue with the Mexicanness of "Frida": Hayek spends much of the film swigging Tequila, mariachis croon in bars, the actors eat enchiladas and mole, stroll through colorful street markets and visit the Aztec pyramids.

But critics here complain the film focuses too heavily on Rivera's womanizing and Kahlo's lesbian affairs, failing to convey the depth of their communist convictions and Kahlo's passion for Mexican folklore.

Artist Guillermo Monroy, 78, one of four "Fridos" who studied painting under Kahlo, saw the film at a press screening and said it was beautifully shot and well acted but lacked spirituality.

"They exalted the parties, the drinking, the affairs to an exaggerated extent . . . but the film lacks soul and spiritual essence to be a great work of art," he told Reuters.

Reuters

Death of actor Richard Harris raises questions for 'Harry Potter' franchise

By Anthony Breznican

HARRIS (left) and Daniel Radcliffe in "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets."

LOS ANGELES—Actor Richard Harris may be gone, but Dumbledore must live on.

The death of the 72-year-old actor, who played the professorial old wizard in the first two "Harry Potter" movies, forced Warner Bros. to face the prospect of finding a replacement.

Third installment

Production on the series' third installment, "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," was to begin in either February or March, and Harris had signed on to appear in it, the studio said.

"Azkaban" director Alfonso Cuaron, who is taking over the fantasy franchise from departing director Chris Columbus, did not immediately return calls for comment.

Harris became ill this year after filming the second part in the series, "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets."

The boisterous star of the films "A Man Called Horse" and "This Sporting Life" created a new generation of fans when he played Albus Dumbledore, the snowy-bearded headmaster of Hogwarts wizarding school, in last year's "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone."

When Harris' agent, Sharon Thomas, announced Oct. 15 that he was being treated for cancer, she said he likely would be available for filming the third movie based on author J.K. Rowling's adventurous boy wizard.

Harris died 10 days later at University College Hospital in London.

Behest

The actor said he took the role of Dumbledore at the behest of his young granddaughter but was wary of appearing in all of the "Harry Potter" films.

Four novels have been published so far, with Dumbledore an important player in each, and Rowling has said there will be seven books overall.

"It wasn't because I didn't like the material or the people involved," Harris told The Associated Press in an interview last year. "I just didn't like the idea that if you said 'yes' and you did it, then you were committed if they did seven, and I would have to do seven.

"I hate that kind of commitment," he added. "I hate the idea that my life in any way is sort of restricted."

Harris said he once asked his agent if it was possible to do a few "Harry Potter" movies—but not all of them.

"He called me back and said, 'You can get out of it,'" Harris recalled with a smile. "I said, 'Tell me, how!' And he said . . . 'Die.'"

AP

Producer picked for 75th Oscar awards ceremony

LOS ANGELES—Oscar fever officially began to take hold in Hollywood as organizers of the world's top movie awards named the man who will produce next year's 75th anniversary award spectacular.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which runs the annual show, said it had picked veteran producer Gilbert Cates to oversee the globally televised event.

11th time

The March 23 show will mark the 11th time Cates has produced the Academy Awards since 1990, a distinction that will mean he would have produced more Oscar shows than anyone else.

"With 10 shows under his belt, no other living producer even comes close to the depth of his experience," said academy president Frank Pierson. "Gil practically invented the awards show as a stylistic genre." Cates' Oscar shows have been nominated for 76 Emmy Awards, the highest honor US television can bestow on its own.

AFP

VIN Diesel (right) and other actors play "second-generation hoods in an era of fading mob opportunities."

'Knockaround Guys' offers some solid performances

By David Germain

LOS ANGELES—"Knockaround Guys" has been knocking around Hollywood's calendar for so long that one of its supporting players, Vin Diesel, became a superstar since it first showed up on the schedule.

Diesel's star power may be the best hope this utterly average mob thriller has of reaching a decent audience.

With Diesel scoring big in "The Fast and the Furious" and "XXX," it may have been a smart move for New Line Cinema to delay "Knockaround Guys," which has been on and off the schedule for a year and a half.

The movie offers solid performances from Diesel, Barry Pepper, John Malkovich, Dennis Hopper and a handful of co-stars, but their nice acting turns generally are wasted on a pack of disagreeable wiseguys who aren't very wise and a dreary story of gangsters behaving savagely.

Writers-directors Brian Koppelman and David Levien set out to craft a flick about the "sons of wiseguys" they encountered in their youth.

It's intriguing, the idea of second-generation hoods in an era of fading mob opportunities, incapable of landing straight jobs because of the stigma of their last names.

Young thugs

A single episode of "The Sopranos," though, offers a far more colorful, insightful profile of the decaying organized-crime scene than "Knockaround Guys" musters. Koppelman and Levien manage nice camaraderie among their young thugs, but most of the characters are too bland, repugnant or dunderheaded—in some cases, all three—for viewers to invest much emotional interest.

The story centers on Matty Demaret (Pepper), son of Brooklyn mob leader Benny Chains (Hopper). At age 12, Matty's uncle Teddy Deserve (Malkovich) put a pistol in his hand with instructions to snuff the snitch who put Benny behind bars.

Matty understandably wimps out. He grows up and dreams of being a sports agent; only no one will hire him because of his mob connections.

So Matty cajoles his father and uncle into a shot at the big time, organizing the delivery of a $500,000 loan from the West Coast to shore up Benny's sagging fortunes.

Matty enlists his pal Johnny Marbles (Seth Green), a pilot with a small plane, to handle the pickup. Spooked by a local sheriff (Tom Noonan) during a refueling stop in Montana, Johnny lets the money get away from him, forcing Matty, burly buddy Taylor Reese (Diesel) and Johnny's cousin Chris Scarpa (Andrew Davoli) to join him in Montana on a hunt for the loot.

Black comedy

This mob-boys-in-Big-Sky-country sounds cleverer than it plays out. For a time, "Knockaround Guys" seems as though it might turn into a black comedy about the gang pursuing the cash as it passes from hand to hand, *a la* the prized rifle in James Stewart's "Winchester '73."

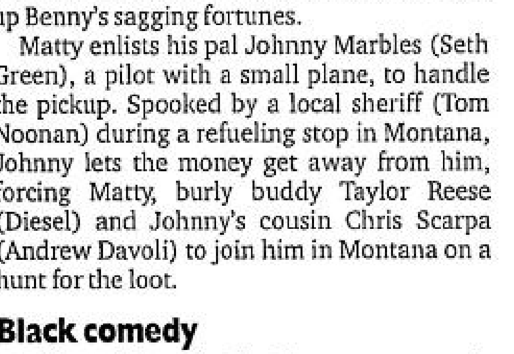
"Knockaround Guys" ultimately becomes a predictably bloody testosterone-fest as Matty and Taylor try to put the Montana town under their thumb and Uncle Teddy eventually arrives for a showdown with the sheriff.

Pepper and Diesel, in a reunion of "Saving Private Ryan" co-stars, impart a good sense of friendship and loyalty, and Diesel is riveting in a steely monologue before deposing the local bully.

The rest of the guys, however, are mostly too odious to stomach, a bunch of creeps whose ruthlessness equates to bad business, even by mob standards.

"Knockaround Guys," a New Line Cinema release, runs 92 minutes. Two stars out of four.

AP



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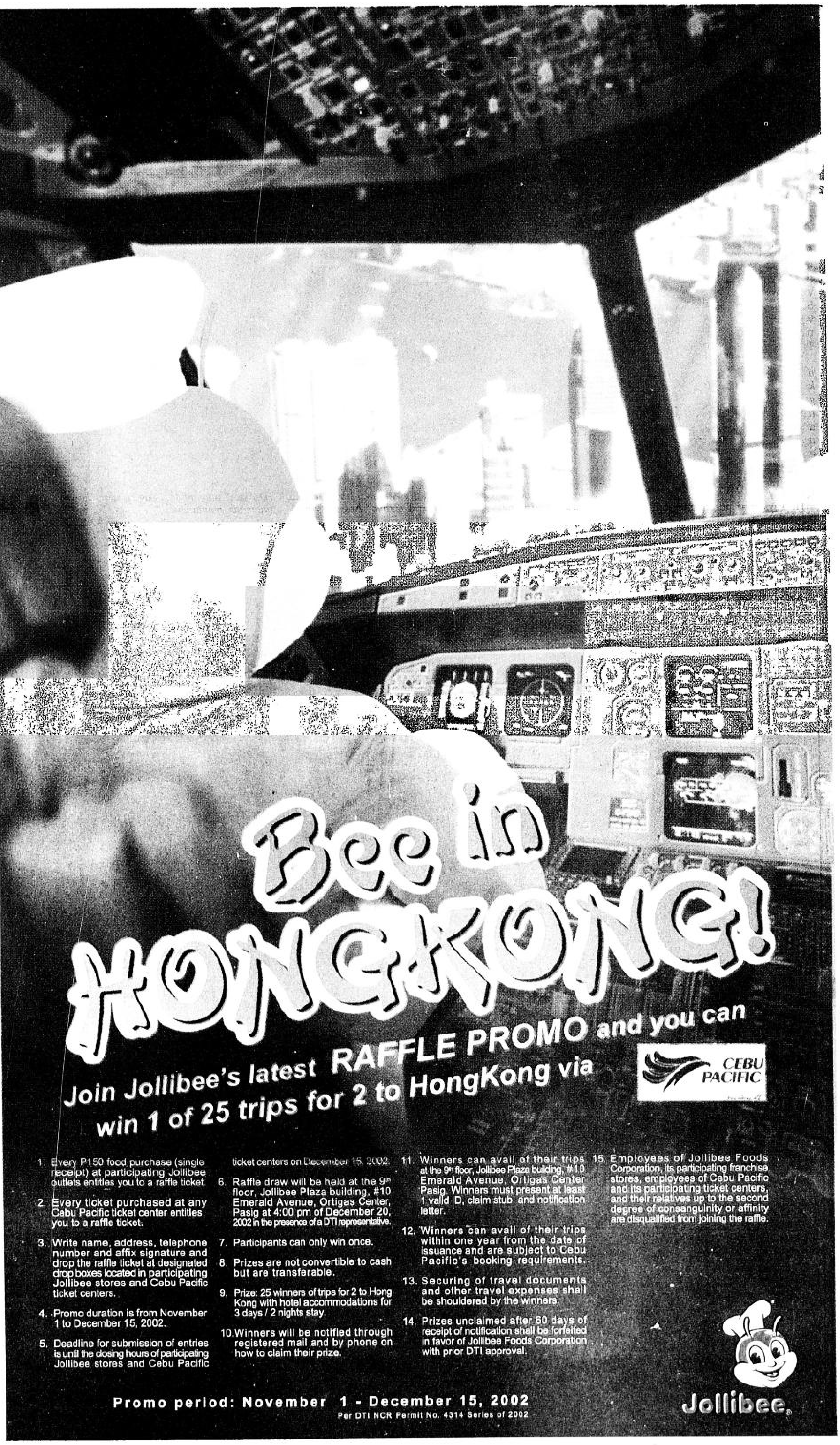
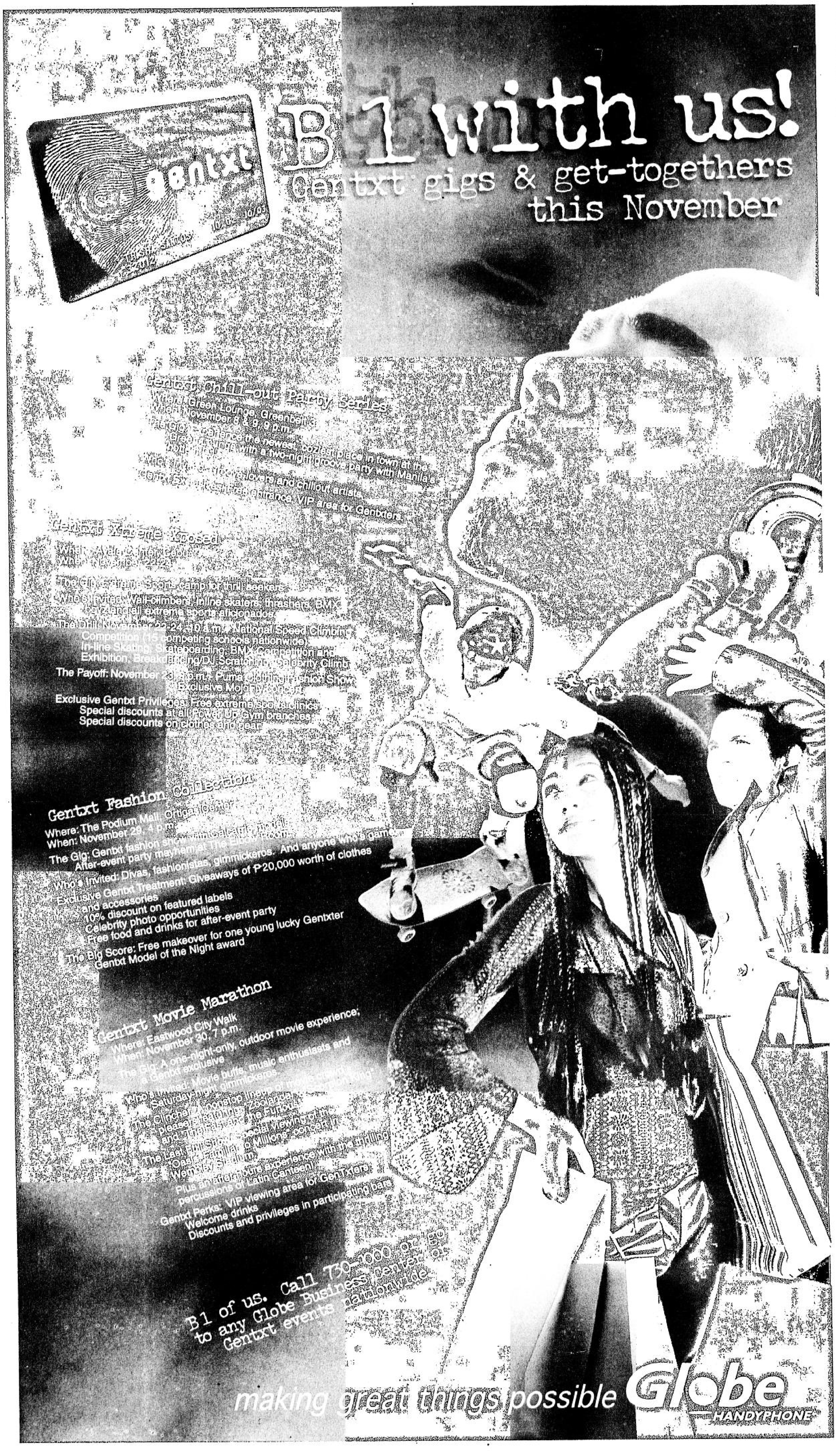


Join Jollibee's latest RAFFLE PROMO and you can win 1 of 25 trips for 2 to HongKong via

1. Every P150 food purchase (single receipt) at participating Jollibee outlets entitles you to a raffle ticket.
2. Every ticket purchased at any Cebu Pacific ticket center entitles you to a raffle ticket.
3. Write name, address, telephone number and affix signature and drop the raffle ticket at designated drop boxes located in participating Jollibee stores and Cebu Pacific ticket centers.
4. Promo duration is from November 1 to December 15, 2002.
5. Deadline for submission of entries is until the closing hours of participating Jollibee stores and Cebu Pacific ticket centers on December 15, 2002.
6. Raffle draw will be held at the 9th floor, Jollibee Plaza building, #10 Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig at 4:00 pm of December 20, 2002 in the presence of a DTI representative.
7. Participants can only win once.
8. Prizes are not convertible to cash but are transferable.
9. Prize: 25 winners of trips for 2 to Hong Kong with hotel accommodations for 3 days / 2 nights stay.
10. Winners will be notified through registered mail and by phone on how to claim their prize.
11. Winners can avail of their trips at the 9th floor, Jollibee Plaza building, #10 Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center Pasig. Winners must present at least 1 valid ID, claim stub, and notification letter.
12. Winners can avail of their trips within one year from the date of issuance and are subject to Cebu Pacific's booking requirements.
13. Securing of travel documents and other travel expenses shall be shouldered by the winners.
14. Prizes unclaimed after 60 days of receipt of notification shall be forfeited in favor of Jollibee Foods Corporation with prior DTI approval.
15. Employees of Jollibee Foods Corporation, its participating franchise stores, employees of Cebu Pacific and its participating ticket centers, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the raffle.

Promo period: November 1 - December 15, 2002
Per DTI NCR Permit No. 4314 Series of 2002



B 1 with us!

Gentxt gigs & get-togethers this November

Gentxt Chill-out Party Series

Where: Green Lounge, Greenbelt
When: November 8 & 9, 9 p.m.
The Gig: Experience the newest, coziest place in town at the Green Lounge with a two-night groove party with Manila's [illegible]
Who's Invited: [illegible] lovers and chillout artists
Gentxt Ex[illegible]: Free entrance, VIP area for Gentxters

Gentxt Xtreme Xposed

Where: Ayala Center Cebu
When: November 22-2[illegible]
The Gig: Extreme Sports camp for thrill seekers
Who's Invited: Wall-climbers, inline skaters, thrashers, BMX-ers and all extreme sports aficionados
The Drill: November 22-24, 10 a.m.: National Speed Climbing Competition (15 competing schools nationwide)
In-line Skating, Skateboarding, BMX Competition and Exhibition, Breakdancing/DJ Scratching, Celebrity Climb
The Payoff: November 2[illegible] p.m.: Puma Clothing Fashion Show
Exclusive Mojofly concert
Exclusive Gentxt Privileges: Free extreme sports clinics
Special discounts at all Power Up Gym branches
Special discounts on clothes and gear

Gentxt Fashion Collection

Where: The Podium Mall, Ortigas Center
When: November 29, 4 p.m.
The Gig: Gentxt fashion show [illegible]
After-event party mayhem at The Elbow Room
Who's Invited: Divas, fashionistas, gimmickeros. And anyone who's game
Exclusive Gentxt Treatment: Giveaways of ₱20,000 worth of clothes and accessories
10% discount on featured labels
Celebrity photo opportunities
Free food and drinks for after-event party
The Big Score: Free makeover for one young lucky Gentxter
Gentxt Model of the Night award

Gentxt Movie Marathon

Where: Eastwood City Walk
When: November 30, 7 p.m.
The Gig: A one-night-only, outdoor movie experience; a Gentxt exclusive
Who's Invited: Movie buffs, music enthusiasts and Saturday-night gimmickeros
The Clincher: [illegible] of movie crowd pleasers [illegible] King
The Last [illegible]: Special viewing of [illegible] Oasis: Familiar to Millions concert at Wembley Stadium
Plus an after-hours experience with the thrilling percussions of Latin Canteen!
Gentxt Perks: VIP viewing area for Gentxters
Welcome drinks
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B1 of us. Call 730-1000 or go to any Globe Business Center. [illegible] Gentxt events nationwide

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SATURDAY*Special*

Legion of Honor award for Charlotte Rampling

PARIS—Actress Charlotte Rampling now has medals from both Britain and France.

Irony

France bestowed its prestigious Legion of Honor award on the British-born actress Tuesday in recognition of her movie career.

Rampling, who moved to France more than 25 years ago, noted a certain irony to the award.

"I do not think that Napoleon imagined when he created the Legion of Honor that it would one day be given to an English actress

LEGION/ E2

RAMPLING. Moved to France more than 25 years ago.

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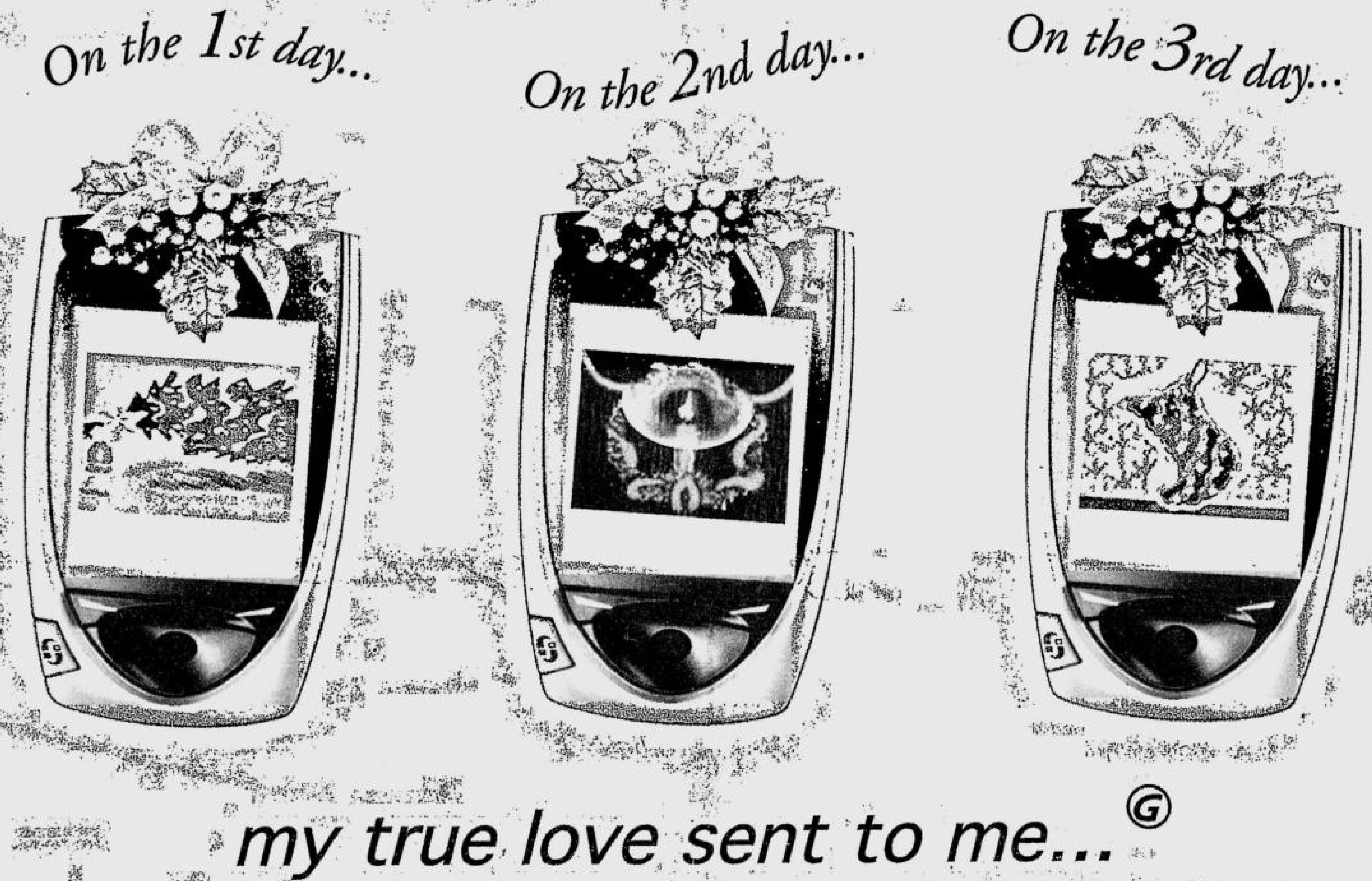
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On the 3rd day...
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Focus on Jeremy Irons

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

(READERS can e-mail questions at pdi_showbiz_qanda@yahoo.com. Our snail mail address still works, though, so keep those questions coming, folks.)

From Phia Concepcion of MCU College of Dentistry, Caloocan: **"I am an avid fan of your column. I love your features on some of my favorite celebrities like Drew Barrymore, Ashley Judd, Hayden Christensen and your updates on 'Lord of the Rings.' Can you please feature Jeremy Irons? More power."**

Thank you, Phia. Your favorite English actor was born 54 years ago in the Isle of Wight in England. We were amazed to learn that this much-admired actor began by "busking" as a street performer before he joined the Bristol Old Vic Theater School.

His first big break came when he played John the Baptist in the popular stage musical, "Godspell." Writers used to describe him as "the thinking woman's pin-up" for coming up with highly acclaimed performances in thought-provoking films, like "Dead Ringers," "Stealing Beauty," "Lolita," "Brideshead Revisited," "The Mission," "French Lieutenant's Woman" and "Reversal of Fortune," films that earned him numerous awards from around the world, including an Oscar, a Golden Globe and an Emmy.

His successful early career on the West End ("Godspell," Shakespeare's "The Winter's Tale," "Taming of the Shrew" and "Much Ado About Nothing," "An Inspector Calls," among others) led to his big-screen debut in "Nijinsky."

In 1984, he debuted on Broadway opposite Glenn Close in Tom Stoppard's "The Real Thing," and snagged a Tony Award for his performance. The actor also starred in Hollywood movies like "Kafka," "M Butterfly," "Damage," "The House of the Spirits," "Stealing Beauty," "Die Hard with a Vengeance," "The Man in the Iron Mask," and "Dungeons and Dragons," and lent his voice to Disney's "The Lion King" as Scar the Mountain Lion.

Two kids

He is married to actress Sinead Cusack and has two kids, Samuel James Brefni and Maximillian Paul Diarmiud.

Fun facts: Irons used to be a drummer for a cover band called "The Four Pillars of Wisdom." He dreamt of becoming a veterinarian but was kicked out of vet school. His favorite poem is D.H. Lawrence's "Snake."

He turned down a role in "Interview with the Vampire" and the Hannibal Lecter character in "Silence of the Lambs" that brought Anthony Hopkins an Oscar.

Write him: c/o Creative Artists Agency, 9830 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212, USA.

IRONS. Wanted to become a veterinarian.

From Tala Francisco of Tarlac, **"I am a fan of Emily Watson, the actress in 'Red Dragon.' I also saw her in 'Angela's Ashes.' What other movies has she appeared in?"**

Emily Watson was first noticed in Lars von Trier's controversial "Breaking the Waves," which brought her the first of her two Oscar nominations (the second

FOCUS/ E3

Legion . . .

From page E1

by a French minister," she said after Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin pinned the medal to her chest.

"I'm a bit speechless actually," she said after the ceremony at de Villepin's ministry. Clutching a glass of champagne, she added: "It really lifts your spirits."

Cultural relations

Last year, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II awarded Rampling an Order of the British Empire, or OBE, for "services to acting and UK-French cultural relations."

Rampling's movies include "The Verdict," with Paul Newman, and "The Night Porter," with Dirk Bogarde.

Napoleon Bonaparte created the Legion d'Honneur in 1802 to recognize citizens' cultural, scientific or social contributions to France. It has since been expanded to include people who aren't from France. *AP*

Philtown and EXPORT BANK: A towering partnership

One McKinley Place, a stunning masterpiece, an innovative high-end residential condominium in Bonifacio Global City, can only come from a partnership that is equally powerful and inspiring. A joint venture between Philippine Townships, Inc. (Philtown) and Export and Industry Bank (EXPORTBANK), One McKinley Place promises to give a new shape to high rise luxury living.

Formerly RFM Properties and Holdings, Inc., Philtown is a wholly-owned subsidiary of RFM Corporation. Philtown is headed by its Chairman and CEO Jose Ma. A. Concepcion III who is also the President and CEO of Philtown's mother company, RFM Corporation. Raul S. Martinez, on the other hand, is the President and COO of Philtown.

Aside from its residential condominiums, Philtown's successful projects include industrial estates, and residential subdivisions such as Tagaytay Heights, Makiling Hills, Plantacion del Sol, Glenwood Park and Woodlands.

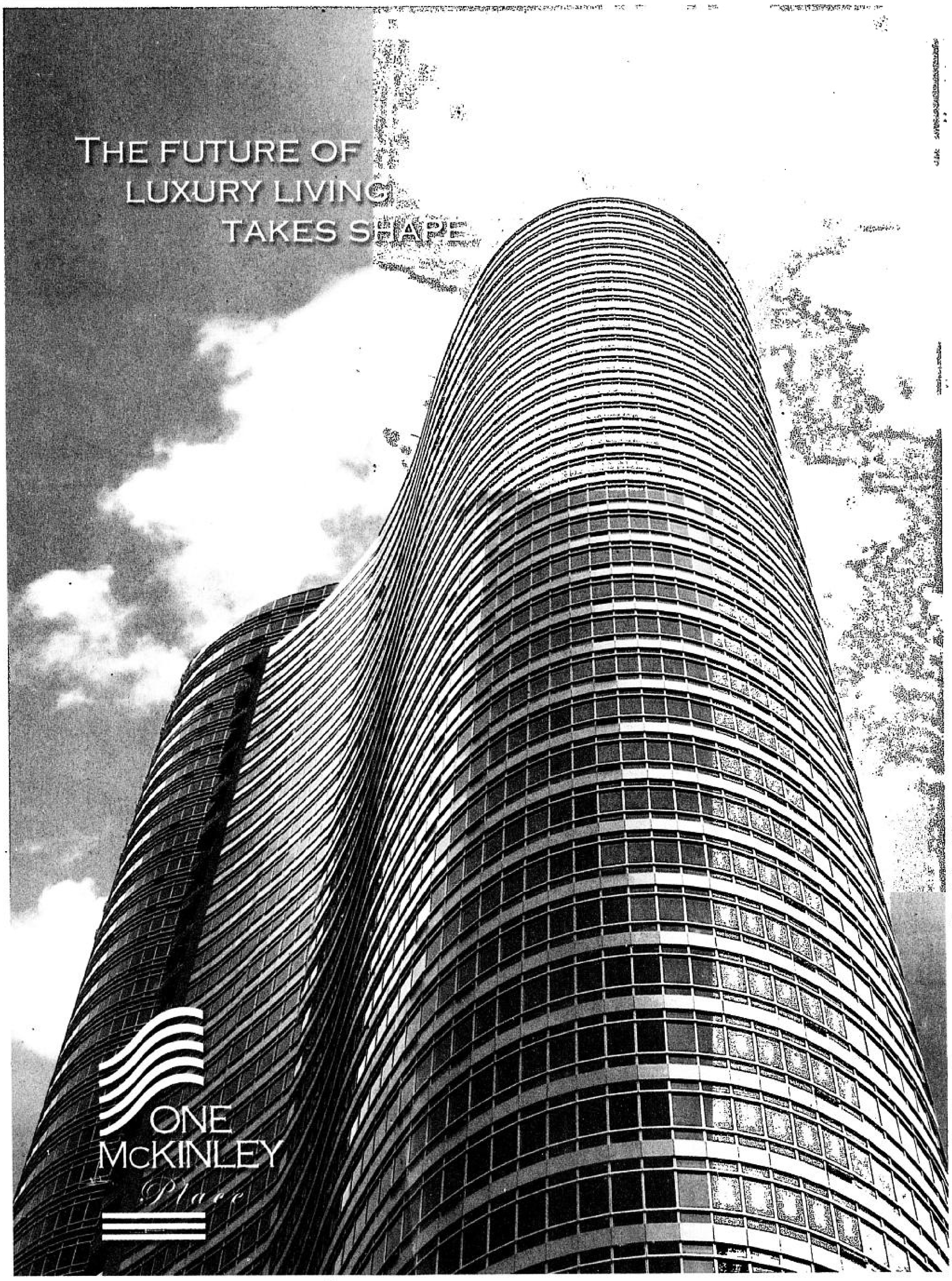
Organized in 1995 as RFM Properties and Holdings, Inc., Philtown focused on its basic mandate of developing and optimizing the value of idle corporate real estate of the RFM Group. In 1998, amidst the Asian economic crisis, the company was able to realize P712 MM in revenues and its net income hit a record P242.5 MM. Sound fiscal management, continuous value engineering and strategic focus gave the company a solid backbone to survive the worst of the crisis. These same strengths continue to drive the success of Philtown projects today.

Collaborating with one of the country's fastest growing commercial banks, EXPORTBANK, the One McKinley Place partnership is certainly on steady ground. EXPORTBANK has established a remarkably substantial asset base of P26 Billion with a total capital of P4.2 Billion within only half a decade since its inauguration in January 1997.

Last year, EXPORTBANK embarked on a very successful merger with Urban Bank Inc. (UBI) and Urbancorp Investments. This alliance resulted in a powerful merger which catapulted the bank to its present ranking in the industry today and made way to the revival of former UBI subsidiaries and affiliates. Headed by its Chairman Sergio R. Ortiz-Luis, Jr. and its President Benjamin P. Castillo, EXPORTBANK holds a niche in trade finance, commercial banking and wealth management.

With 29 branches nationwide EXPORTBANK targets to open 18 more in 2003, definitely making it one of the fastest growing and most promising commercial banks in the industry.

With Philtown and EXPORTBANK behind One McKinley Place, it shall surely be the exquisite, enchanting and elegant high rise condominium that will be the residence of choice for sophisticated urban dwellers who value extreme comfort and luxury.



One McKinley Place. An elegant high-rise condominium that boasts of innovative architecture and interior design. Located in the Bonifacio Global City, its prestigious address gives easy access to the major commercial districts; and offers a panoramic view of Manila Golf, Antipolo Hills and Laguna Lake.

Built with state-of-the-art amenities, One McKinley Place promises you absolute comfort and luxury.

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More pioneering Filipino directors rediscovered

By Nestor U. Torre

AFTER Jose Nepomuceno made Filipino-made movies popular in the 1920s, other homegrown filmmakers began to come up with their own productions.

Individually, they had different styles and reasons for making movies; together, they proved that, soon enough, local movies could be made that needn't suffer in comparison to imported films, or productions made by foreign directors working in the country.

Extra

Before the '20s, Vicente Salumbides went to the States to study filmmaking, and ended up as an extra in some of the movies made by Jesse Lasky. Back in the Philippines, Salumbides went into partnership with Nepomuceno.

What he had learned in Hollywood came in handy, because he was able to improve elements of make-up and editing, and also used more close-ups in emotional sequences.

Indeed, when Salumbides filmed "Miracle of Love" in 1925, the movie was praised for its innovative use of close-ups, brisk editing, parallel cutting, simultaneous action and "Hollywood-style" make-up.

(Many years later, Salumbides' filmization of the popular folk narrative, "Florante at Laura," was also cited as an exceptional production.)

Poet and dramatist

In 1929, Julian Manansala directed "Patria Amore," which was shown despite an injunction filed by Manila's Spanish community. In one contemporary account, Manansala is described as "a well-known poet and dramatist."

Aside from Salumbides, other Filipinos had gone all the way to Hollywood in the 1920s to learn how to make movies. They included Ricardo Marcelino, Eduardo de Castro, Salvador Tinsay, Cecilio Joaquin, Richard Abelardo and Nick Osmeña.

In 1928, Manuel Silos is credited with the direction of "The Three Tramps." The movie is described as "a short comedy," and starred Augusto Silos, Miami Salvador and Enrique Espinosa.

Box-office hit

Manuel Silos' first full feature, "Mystery of the Convent," was a box-office hit. Much later, he directed the classic "Biyaya ng Lupa." He is known for his experiments with visuals and film techniques.

Film Year 1930 also saw the emergence of another major director, Carlos Vander Tolosa, who launched his directing career with "Collegian Love," starring Naty Fernandez, Gregorio Fernandez, Canuplin, Patring Carvajal and Juanito Hernandez.

The film is described in a contemporary account as "the first sound film produced locally. It tells of a young man who spend his days in college flirting, playing around, and doing anything except study. He falls in love with a rich college girl who is promised to another man, a senator. However, the hero wins the girl's hand."

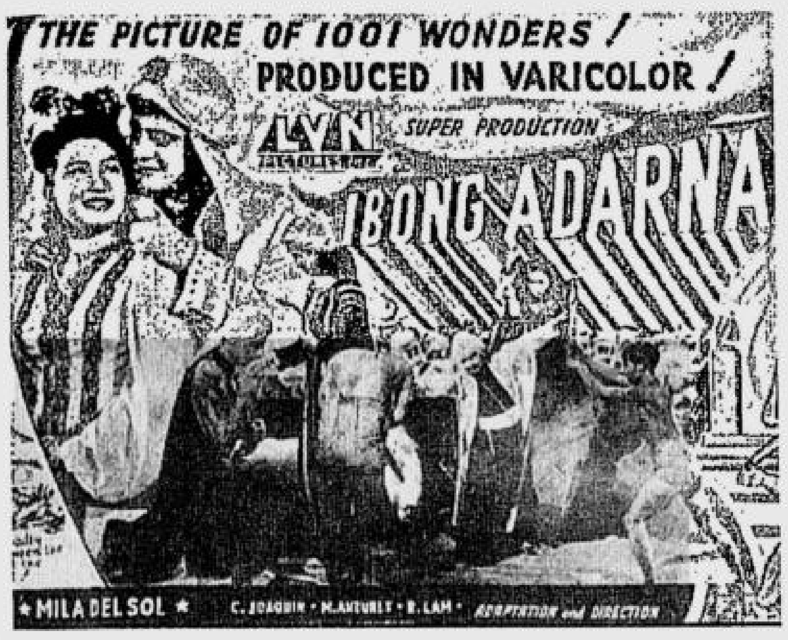
Musical films

Biographical notes on Tolosa inform us that, before he ended up in the movies, he was an exponent of classical Spanish dances! This background helped him in initially establishing himself as a director of musical films.

More directorial debuts: 1931, Jose Domingo Badilla filmed "Princess Tarjata." 1932, Eduardo de Castro megged "A Coed's Romance," starring himself and Rita Rica. ("Can the weaker sex prove itself stronger by outwitting and almost outplaying the opposite sex? A romantic drama whose plot centers around campus life.")

1934, Octavio Silos, Manuel's brother, scripted and directed "Hinagpis ng Magulang" with Mary Walter, Carlos Padilla and Rita Rica. And in 1935, Agapito Conchu megged "Hatol ng Langit," starring Norma del Rosario, Manuel Ortega, Domingo Principe and Pedro Faustino.

Our thanks to these pioneers in film direction in the Philippines. Their early efforts went a long way in hastening the development of their difficult arts and craft here, and laid a strong foundation for the directors who came after them to build on.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LVN'S "Ibong Adarna" was directed by Vicente Salumbides.

ENFANT
STROLLERS & PLAYPENS

Focus on . . .

From page E2

was for Anand Tucker's "Hilary and Jackie") for Best Actress. She was spotted by Von Trier during a presentation of Lillian Hellman's "The Children's Hour," and won the lead role after Helena Bonham Carter dropped out at the last minute because of the film's explicit sexuality.

Best Actress awards

For her performance in "Breaking the Waves," Emily won Best Actress awards from the New York Film Critics and the National Society of Film Critics.

Her first professional job as an actress was for the Royal Shakespeare Company. She landed "Breaking the Waves" at the age of 29. The 5'8", 35-year-old actress will next appear in "Equilibrium" with Christian Bale, Taye Diggs and Sean Bean.

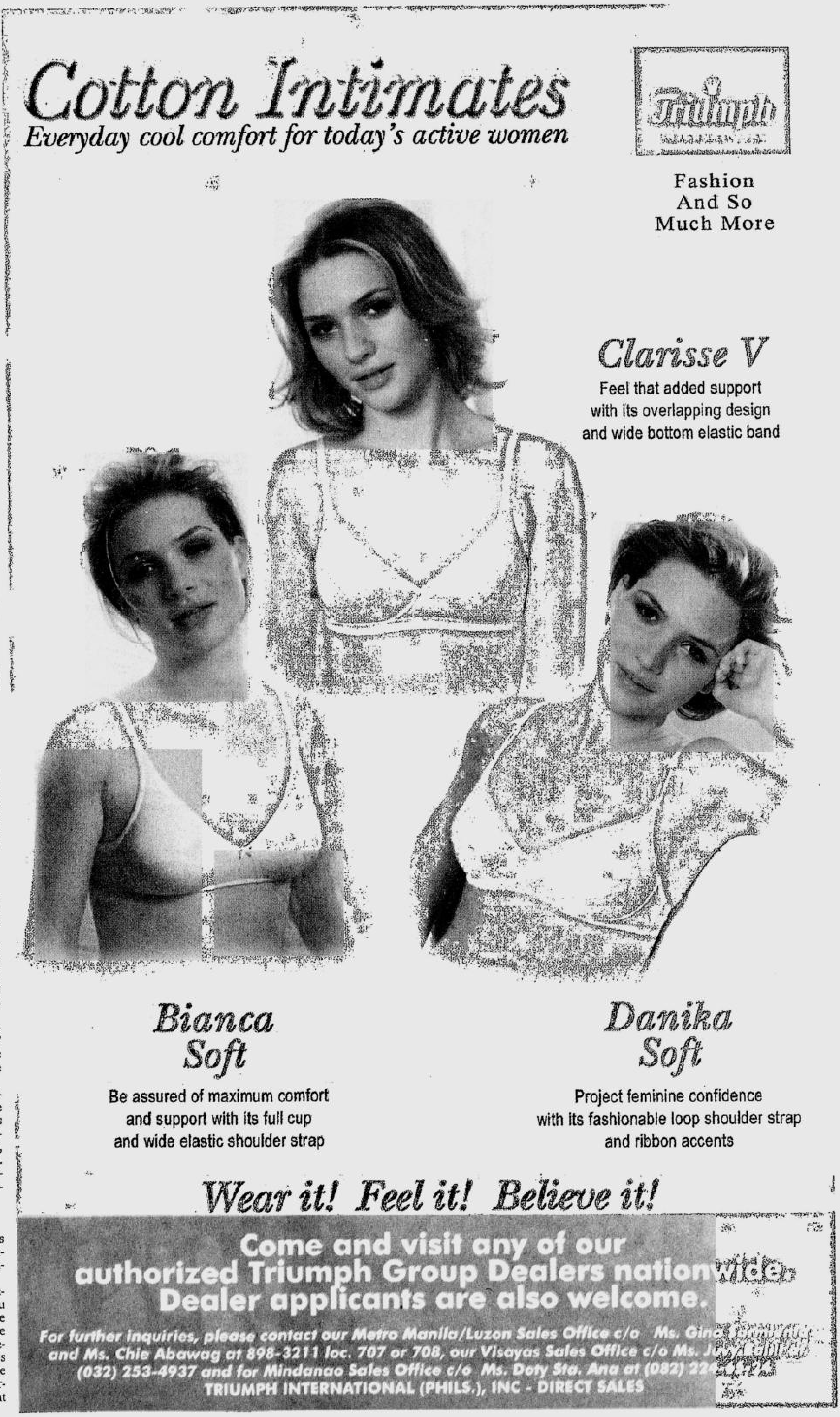
She was also seen in Paul Thomas Anderson's Cannes favorite, "Punch-Drunk Love," Robert Altman's "Gosford Park," Alan Parker's "Angela's Ashes" and Jim Sheridan's "The Boxer," with Daniel Day Lewis.

Her success for "Breaking the Waves" surprised her. She says, "I wasn't prepared for the way people responded to it. Suddenly I was being interviewed and asked all sorts of questions. All my life, I've loved watching movies, but I didn't foresee the glamour of the Oscars. In England, the Academy Awards are reported as straight news. In America, they are considered the height of glamour."

'TVM' notes

Numerous e-mails and text messages ask us if it's true that the performances of "The Vagina Monologues in Filipino" have been canceled. The answer is "No."

Come catch the last performance of top actresses Gina Alajar, Pinky Amador and Angelu de Leon (who gamely stayed up till 2:30 in the morning on opening day, to thresh out the last-minute changes brought about by unforeseen events), as they essay a variety of roles using a more contemporary translation of Eve Ensler's highly acclaimed play. Last performance is at the Music Museum tonight at nine.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TRIUMPH INTERNATIONAL (PHILS.), INC - DIRECT SALES

Fade out for writer-director Chaning Carlos

By Lynn S. Pareja

I REMEMBER Chaning Carlos best for his love of travel. He spoke of journeys to many lands as though he had been there, but like the scripts he wrote to embellish his movies, it was his vivid imagination that brought life to his stories.

Imagination

A fellow director in Sampaguita Pictures, Armando Garces, once said to him, "*Alam mo*, your imagination is like reality!"

When he broke into the headlines in 1953 as the first Filipino to win the best screenplay award in the Asian Film Festival, his one regret was that he did not go to Tokyo, Japan to claim his prize for "Ang Asawa Kong Amerikana." "I wanted to see the cherry blossoms in springtime," he told me.

He also wanted to see the famous island of Bali. In 1963 his wish was granted when Dr. Jose R. Perez sent him to Indonesia together with director Tony Cayado and Sampaguita stars Luis Gonzales, Daisy Romualdez and Josephine Estrada to film "Holiday in Bali."

He wrote his script on location and had a grand time brushing shoulders with royalty in the ancient palaces of the region where ceremonial events were held. "I felt like a prince who rose from being a pauper," he gushed.

Poor

Luciano B. Carlos had humble beginnings. He had to look for work early because his family was poor and couldn't afford his education beyond high school. Discovering his penchant for writing, he applied directly to Sampaguita Pictures.

CARLOS coming home from location shooting abroad.

His beautiful strokes caught the attention of a girl opening the studio fan mail. She brought the bulky envelope directly to the attention of Doc Perez, who supervised promotion and marketing operations.

Recalling the event later, Doc Perez told me that he laughed out loud as he read Chaning's letter, quoting expressions that were so funny, it was like reading from Mars Ravelo's "Buhay Pilipino" comics strips.

He immediately sent for the author, only to discover that the stripling lad who appeared before him had not even written a single movie script in his whole life!

CHANING (right) with film colleagues.

Since director Nardo Vercudia, who was filming "Huling Patak ng Dugo," was a family friend, Chaning lived with him and worked with scriptwriter Tommy David to know the mechanics of writing a movie script. By the time the production was finished, Chaning was ready to write his own full-length screenplay. But "Tenyente Ramirez" encountered censorship problems, so it was shelved.

Third assignment

"Campo O'Donnell", his third assignment, finally pulled him through. Not only did the film break box-office records, but it also established Chaning Carlos as a full-fledged scriptwriter. Now, he could go solo. A room at the tower of the Vera-Perez residence on Valencia st. was assigned to him, where he could write away to his heart's content. He was now an adopted member of the family and a permanent guest resident.

But he shied away from war pictures after that. Enough of suffering and violence! Life held hope for humanity, and the bright spots of life were punctuated by laughter and gaiety. He liked his next assignment, "Ang Asawa Kong Amerikana," because it allowed him incursions into the private lives of husband and wife, some of which were particularly funny.

Eddie Romero, the director, liked his script and the lead actor, Oscar Moreno, was easy to work with. He laughed outright at some of the scenes he had to do in the film. Joan Page, who portrayed the American wife, was sweet and very cooperative. She was a natural for the title role.

Honors

Doc Perez was elated that the film won honors for Sampaguita Pictures. It was the only Philippine entry that won a prize at the festival. In time, the studio would adopt the slogan, "The Name That Leads."

The scenes that Chaning Carlos imagined and wrote for a foreigner living in the Philippines were later on reversed and reprised in his other films, where the tables were turned and it was the Pinoy impacting on the foreigners abroad with his own culture and way of living.

He took particular delight in his Dolphy films for RVQ Productions. Together, Dolphy and Chaning made a formidable team. Once, in Rome, they were so fascinated with the image created by the Fountain of Trevi in "Three Coins in the Fountain" that they decided to do something about it. Before long, onlookers were aghast to see something they had never seen before: people fending off the summer heat in the cool waters of the fountain.

In another instance, Chaning and Dolphy were in Mexico filming "El Pinoy Matador" when Dolphy in his full matador costume was chased all over the stadium by a bull that had seemingly ran amuck. While the crowd gasped, Dolphy struck a pose, and the wounded bull facing him, with all the pointed weapons sticking out

FADE/ E5

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS
presents
SINUKWAN FESTIVAL 2002
NOV 30 to DEC 6 at SM City PAMPANGA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FOOD AND CRAFTS FAIR
Nov. 30 – Dec. 6, 10:00 am
Entertainment Plaza, SM City Pampanga

A Showcase of renowned Kapampangan cuisine and indigenous crafts.

PHOTO CONTEST AND EXHIBIT
Nov. 30 – Dec. 6, 10:00 am
Entertainment Plaza, SM City Pampanga

A week-long exposition of the Kapampangan culture and way of life participated in by local photographers, both amateur and professional.

SUNIS NING LEGUAN: a musicale
Dec. 1, 5:30 pm
Entertainment Plaza, SM City Pampanga

A theatrical presentation of Kapampangan music and dance performed by young thespians from the Sinukwan Training Center for the Arts and Arti Sta. Rita.

KAPAMPANGAN CRAFTS AND SKILLS DEMO
Dec. 2
Entertainment Plaza, SM City Pampanga

3:00 – 4:00 pm Betis wood carving
4:00 – 5:00 pm Sto. Tomas Pottery
5:00 – 6:00 pm Original Kapampangan Recipes

SERENATA: featuring "Lumanug Banda 48" of Betis Guagua
Dec. 3, 4:00 pm
Entertainment Plaza, SM City Pampanga

The Serenata is a unique Kapampangan practice during fiestas or religious events where marching bands would outdo each other, alternately playing marches, overtures, and other classical music.

MUTYA NING SINUKWAN 2002 (Search for the Festival Queen)
Dec. 4, 5:30 pm
Entertainment Plaza, SM City Pampanga

A showcase of Kapampangan beauties revealing the distinct traits of a "Dalagang Kapampangan". The Festival Queen shall be paraded on float on Friday, Dec. 6, as part of the street dancing presentation.

BASULTO SINGING CONTEST
Dec. 5, 5:00 pm
Entertainment Plaza, SM City Pampanga

The Basulto is an indigenous Kapampangan song, but unfortunately, a dying genre of our indigenous music. The contest aims to revive this traditional Kapampangan music.

SKY DIVING AND AIR SHOW
Dec.6, 4:00 pm
Festival route

A jaw-dropping skydiving exhibition and air show with choppers showering confetti drops on the street dancers below.

STREET DANCING PARADE
Dec. 6, 1:30pm

LAHAR FLOAT PARADE
Dec. 6, 1:30pm

FREE DANCE INTERPRETATION
Dec. 6, 4:00pm
SM City Pampanga

A spectacular street and dance presentation covering 5.2 Kilometers.

Competing Teams:
[illegible] COMPUTER COLLEGE • BELURAN HIGH SCHOOL • DATA COLLEGE • DON HONORIO VENTURA COLLEGE OF ARTS & TRADES • HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY • UNIVERSITY OF THE ASSUMPTION • UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES PAMPANGA • CITY OF ANGELES • CITY OF SAN FERNANDO (Sindalan High School) • MUNICIPALITY OF LUBAO (San Pablo 2nd National High School) • MUNICIPALITY OF MABALACAT (Don Bosco Academy) • MUNICIPALITY OF STO. TOMAS (San Matias High School)

BUGHAW INTERACTIVE MEDIA

PEPSI SUN.STAR PAMPANGA Nestlé JOMARK

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THE FOUNDATION FOR LINGAP KAPAMPANGAN, INC.
(Save Pampanga Movement)

Joseph and Jaymarks back where it belongs

WORD OF MOUTH
Sandy Daza

I FIRST met Mars when my good friend, Col. Eddie De La Cerna, took me to his tiny food stall at the side of Cuneta Astrodome. Our lunch consisted of mostly seafood. I was stunned at how delicious his dishes were, and I was excited to share the discovery in my column. That was almost a decade ago.

Memorable experience

Today, after many years and moves, Mars is back to his "place of birth," Cuneta Astrodome.

Everytime I have foreign guests, the only place I can think of bringing them is Mars' eatery. The meal will surely be a totally new and memorable experience.

The food is exceptionally delicious and unique. There have been many *ihaw-ihaw* places that have sprouted all over the metropolis. But to me, this is still the place that serves the best-tasting *Inihaw na Panga*, and is the creator of the *"Crispy Pata" Buntot ng Tuna*—duplicated all over but never equaled.

Some of his outlets did very well initially, but like many other outlets that expand, the quality suffered. The only time I notice his food to be consistent is when Mars himself is around to supervise. The Cuneta Astrodome branch is personally handled by him.

Impact

So, this Yuletide season, with many relatives and friends back to spend the holidays here, I strong suggest you treat them to something Pinoy, different and sure to make an impact on them. Check out Joseph and Jaymarks at the Cuneta Astrodome.

His best sellers are his Crispy *Buntot ng Tuna* which I feel he should leave on the bone rather than removing the meat from the tail. It is crunchy, sticky and, dipped in *toyo* with *sili* sauce, heavenly.

His *Inihaw na Panga ng Tuna* and the Marlin belly are exceptional. He also has delicious *Gindara*. (Warn your guest though about the effects of this item. It is so oily, it manifests itself after a day— but it's worth it)

Also yummy: *Puso ng Saging sa gata*, a prawn dish in a *buko* shell, and the sweetest and freshest chilled mangoes. Joseph and Jaymarks is located at the front of the Astrodome facing the boulevard. For reservations, call 833-1811.

Happy eating!

CHANING Carlos will be sorely missed.

Fade out . . .

From page E4

of its hide, simply fainted from exhaustion!

Bullfight

In retrospect, Chaning would say that it was easier for the Pinoy to survive a bullfight than for him to contend with the burly Italian police and the long arm of the law.

Each time Chaning came home from one of his film locations abroad, he would regale his friends with stories of his experiences in such a way that it became difficult to tell the real from the imagined.

But he was such an entertaining storyteller that it did not matter anymore whether it was true or not. At the end, what was important was that you had a good time listening to what he said.

Richard Halliburton, who wrote "The Flying Carpet," 1932, had to re-live ancient incidents in history to make a glorious adventure out of his travels. Like Leander, he swam the Hellespont. He retraced the routes of Ulysses, Cortes, Balboa, Alexander and Hannibal.

In Chaning's case, much of his zest and spontaneity came from an insatiable curiosity to fit the image to reality. Was the world of Suzie Wong really like Hong Kong in "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing"? Were the sampan girls of Aberdeen as lovely and frail-looking as Gloria Romero in "Hong Kong Holiday"?

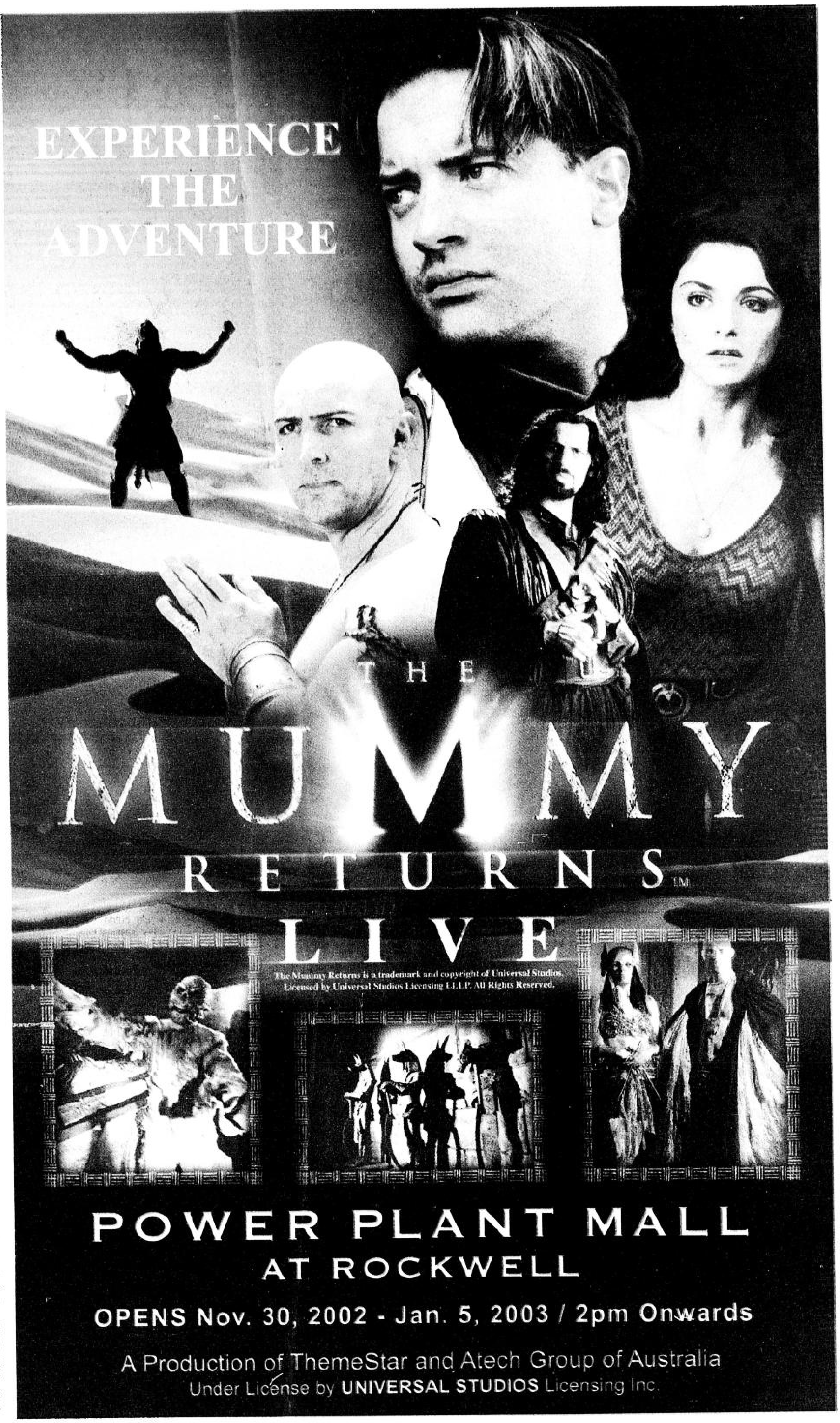
Some people try to test the image by its reality. Others, like Chaning, test reality by its image.

Birthday party

When his daughter, Camille, invited him to go to California and join her and her American husband, John Chupinsky, at the birthday party of their one-year-old, Chaning said yes immediately. To his other children here who worried about his health, he intoned an oft-quoted phrase which was the title of a movie he made not long after he lost his only son, Victor: "Daddy Knows Best."

But maybe, because he was also deeply religious, he knew that he would not come back to us this one last time, and he was eager to embark on a journey to meet his Maker.

We will miss you, Chaning Carlos, but we wish you Godspeed. Thank you for making our lives happier with your films. To us you will always be, in the words of Wallace Stevens' poetry, "The Emperor of Ice Cream." Dolphy is King of Comedy, but Chaning Carlos is the Emperor of the genre of comedy in Philippine movies!



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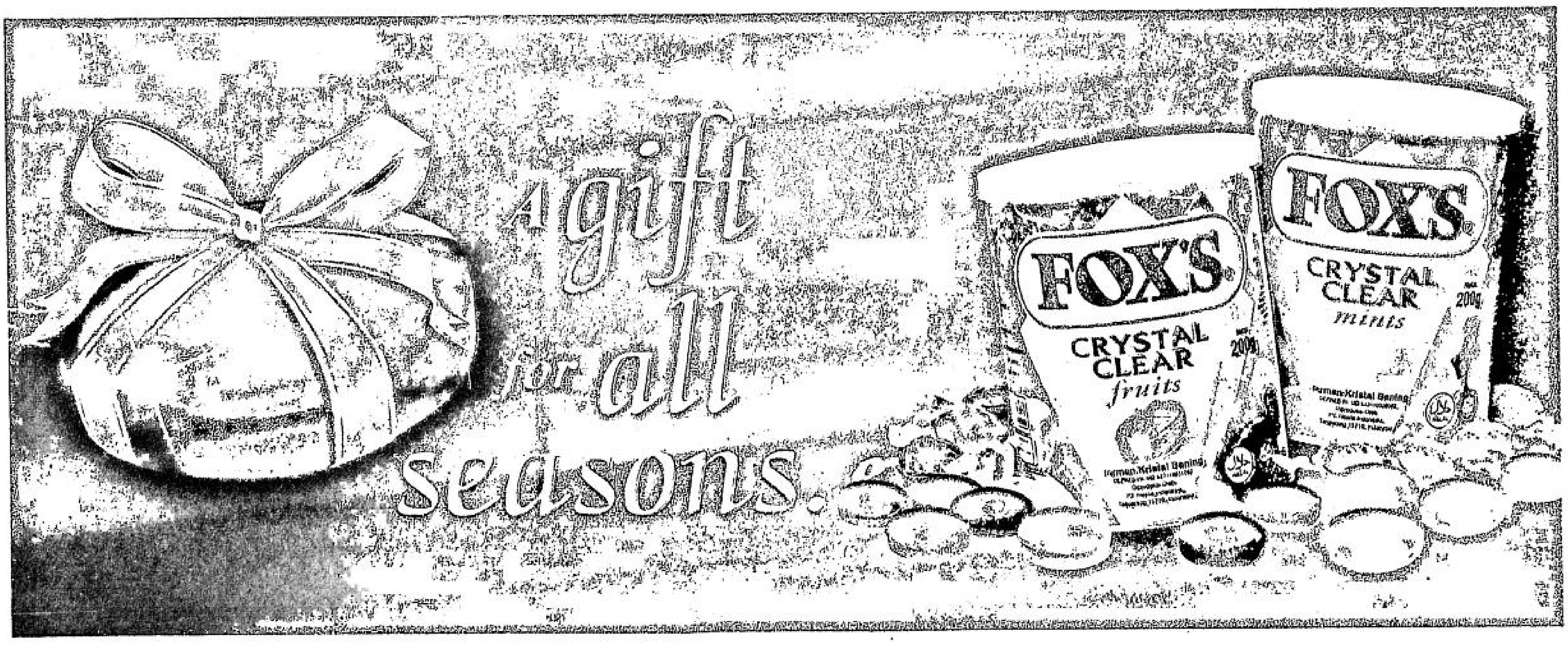

How 10 best films of past 25 years were selected

By Nestor U. Torre

COPPOLA'S "Apocalypse Now" was shot in the Philippines.

SOME weeks ago, film critics in the United Kingdom revealed their choices of the best 10 movies of the last 25 years.

Top film

The top film, Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now," was followed by Martin Scorsese's "Raging Bull," Ingmar Bergman's "Fanny and Alexander," Scorsese's "Goodfellas," David Lynch's "Blue Velvet," Spike Lee's "Do the Right Thing," Ridley Scott's "Blade Runner," Wong Kar-Wai's "Chungking Express," Terence Davies' "Distant Voices, Still Lives," Sergio Leone's "Once Upon a Time in America," and Edward Yang's "A One and a Two . . ."

Some of those choices surprised or confused film buffs, so Sight & Sound magazine explains how the critics it polled reached their verdicts:

"Apocalypse Now" (which was shot in the Philippines) won because it is "a richly complex, madcap experiment in war filmmaking that comes off and never falls from the tightrope it walks between extravagance and profundity."

Most popular

"Raging Bull" was simply the most popular of the many films by Scorsese cited by the different critics who were polled. In fact, he's the only director to have two movies in the top 10, and his other films, like "Casino" and "The King of Comedy," also did well in the next tier of critically acclaimed productions.

Ingmar Bergman being Ingmar Bergman, "Fanny and Alexander," one of his later films, had to be celebrated—and justly so.

Scorsese's "Goodfellas" is a gangster-cocaine saga that has a compelling effect on viewers because it takes them into the underworld's very underbelly, where its criminal denizens are revealed to be people like—us!

Similar effect

For its part, Lynch's "Blue Velvet" achieves a similar effect by baring "the dark heart of suburbia." Lee's "Do the Right Thing," described as "a furious street opera," goes from dark to uncompromisingly black.

Scott's "Blade Runner" is "the blockbuster cinema of spectacle that reshaped the world's media industries in the '80s and '90s." Wong Kar Wai's "Chungking Express" was singled out to show how "the creative batteries of cinema were recharged in Asia during the late '80s and the '90s."

Historical epic

Leone's "Once Upon a Time in America" is "a sprawling historical epic" that traces the roots of the American dream—and nightmare.

And what about Yang's "A One and a Two . . .," which few film buffs have even heard of? What made it better in the eyes of the 50 UK critics polled than other ace finalists like "In the Mood for Love," "All About My Mother" and "The Double Life of Veronique?"

Yang's film is praised as "a plausible and comprehensive view of contemporary urban life, its elements of soap opera and melodrama integrated as skillfully as its sense of the interconnectedness of things."

Knowledge of cinema

Although most of the top 10 films came from the late '70s and the '80s, the Sight & Sound survey states, "The 1990s were perhaps the richest consecutive years of cinema since the 1950s. But to appreciate this richness requires a knowledge of cinema from across the world."

In other words, film critics and movie buffs alike should do their homework and view movies from other countries, so that the findings of contemporary surveys like this will more truthfully reflect the dynamism of the current film times.

(P.S. At 9 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 1, Star Movies is showing "Apocalypse Now Redux," the restored and updated version of Coppola's Vietnam epic. Watch it and see if you agree that "Apocalypse Now" is indeed the best film made in the last 25 years.)

ART FOR A CAUSE

"The Harvest," an original oil in full vibrant colors on a collector's-edition art plate, is presented by artist Ang Kiukok (right), 2001 National Artist for Visual Arts, to John Cua, president of Davao Central High School (DCHS) Alumni Association-Manila Chapter.

One of Ang KiuKok's favorite subjects, "The Harvest" signifies abundance and prosperity. The artwork highlights the artist's expressionistic interpretation, which sets him apart from his contemporaries, and is also the reason why he is regarded as a major influence in popularizing modernism in the Philippine art scene.

Proceeds from the sale of these collector's-edition art plates are for various civic-oriented projects of the Davao Central High School Alumni Association.

Ang KiuKok, who has donated "The Harvest" for this worthy cause, was born in Davao City, and is an alumnus of DCHS. Call Jeanne at (632) 416-3479 and 0919-3338386, or Tina at (632) 242-0843 or 242-0785.

The rock

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

DEAR Clara,

I've been having some worry attacks lately. I think you've noticed, and I thank you for understanding. It's been quite difficult. A lot of things have happened and it can get very confusing. There have been times when I just wanted to scream to clear my lungs as well as my heart and mind.

Aggravations

I think, God is telling me something. I'm beginning to comprehend the workings of the Divine. As He continues to work in us, He not only allows but even sends us certain problematic situations and petty aggravations, not to crush and punish us but, in fact, to empower and strengthen us—and to force us to discover the talents He has given us, and to acquire the values we need to improve the quality of our lives.

At first, I was afraid. And rebellious at the same time. Because my instincts told me to refuse to go through the process. Allow me to explain what I mean:

Before, I had a short fuse for people's idiocies. For instance, people who didn't possess the aptitude to understand and follow simple instructions—they used to set me off real bad. Now, I've learned to be more patient and forbearing.

Decisions

There was a time that I passionately hated it when people didn't keep their promises. I'd base certain crucial plans and decisions on their word but they'd renege on it and I'd find my life in shambles. Today, I've learned to take those things in stride.

Whenever things turned out differently from what I had fervently hoped for, I'd curse and simmer inside—and continue to manipulate people and events so I'd still end up getting what I wanted. It left me frustrated and ridden with anxiety but I was so self-centered that I didn't even notice that the things I did for myself were actually what hurt me the most. I'd like to believe that I've become more accepting, more forgiving, more believing.

I also used to have a gigantic distaste for pompous and arrogant people. They'd swagger into your life and proceed to treat you like you were a blob of silliness or some insect whose purpose in life was totally alien to superior creatures like them.

Fever

I had a recent experience with this kind of creature. As you know, I had a fever and, despite my histrionic protestations, I had to be brought to the hospital. In my situation, a mere fever could lead to some pretty serious complications, so I had no choice but to abide by the instructions of my doctors.

As it turned out, the tubes inserted inside me for my thrice-weekly dialysis needed to be extracted because my body was developing an aversion to it. I needed to be operated on to remove them.

My nephrologist assured me it was a simple surgical procedure, and she was most accommodating. She acceded to my requests: First, I didn't want to be anesthetized. Second, I wanted music to be played while the operation was in progress.

Let me explain. I didn't want general anesthesia because I detested the feeling of drifting away to sleep. I don't know if you can relate to this but when death stares you in the face, you want to look at it straight in the eye. You wouldn't want to be lulled to lala-land—not knowing if you'd ever wake up again.

You'd rather feel the pain than go through the torment of thinking about whether this was "it"—but you hadn't fed the cat that morning, you forgot to water the plants, you failed to remind the maid you wanted the blue dress for your funeral, you neglected to kiss your youngest daughter the night before, and the papers, you didn't remember where you put the papers, you even didn't know what papers you were looking for...!

Anesthesia

I'd been through this, Clara, when they gave me a big dose of anesthesia just before they inserted those tubes into me. I floated from wakefulness to slumber. I was fighting terribly hard against going to sleep. My thought then was: this must be how Leo Echegaray felt when they put him to sleep.

As for the music, I wanted soothing, exhilarating, soul-enriching music. I strongly felt there should be music in the operating room. I believe music should be a part of the medical treatment. Besides, within reasonable limits, whatever it that the patient feels could help him hasten the process of healing should be allowed.

THE ROCK/ E7

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM NOV 30 - DEC 6

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	29	33
[illegible]	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:30 Bida si Mister, Bida si Misis 9:30 FPJ Action Cinema 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	6:00 Fox News 11:00 Business and Leisure	7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Family Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Saturday Night Specials *The Masters* 11:30 Star Trek Voyager	6:00 Dragon Ball Z 6:30 Imbestigador 7:30 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:30 Kakabakaba 9:30 Blockbuster Cinema 11:30 Master Showman	6:00 Hot Ticket 6:30 Entertainment Tonite 7:00 Largo 8:00 7 Days 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse *Soul 2 Seoul*	7:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 8:00 Star For A Night 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 Kagat ng Dilim	6:00 Travel Time 6:30 The Beast Machines 7:00 Game Plan 7:30 7th Heaven 8:30 Boston Public 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 11:30 Reel Deal	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 Revealed w/ Jules Asner 8:00 Movies on E! 10:00 David Letterman
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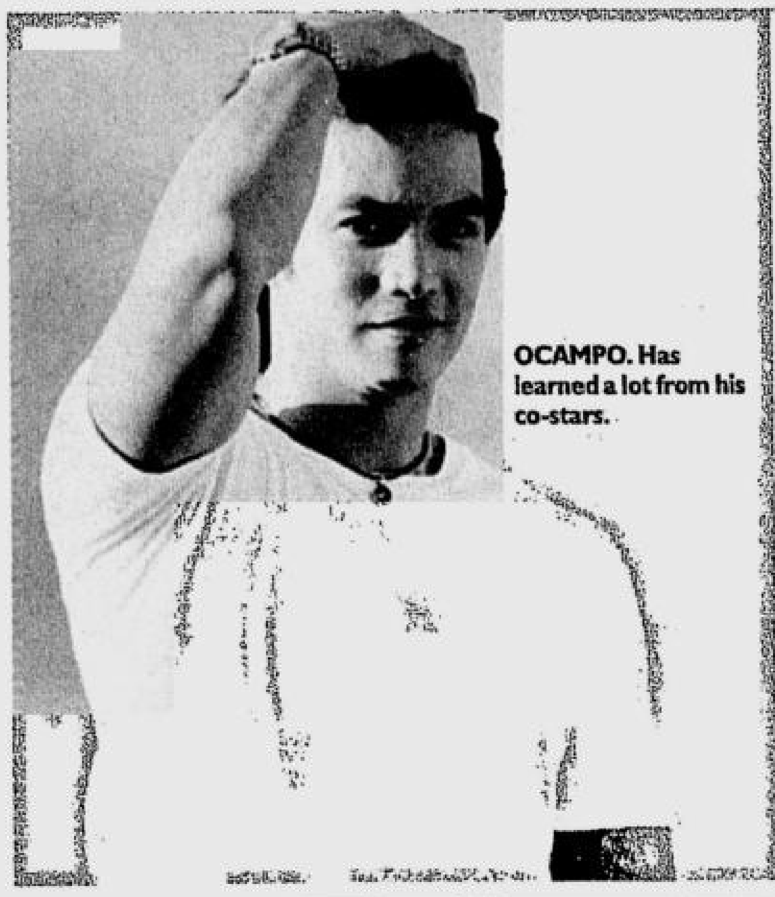


OCAMPO. Has learned a lot from his co-stars.

Diether Ocampo shares his blessings this Yuletide

By Jocelyn Valle

DIETHER Ocampo admits to having had a deprived childhood. "So now, I want to have the things that I couldn't have then," he avers.

Earnings

Well, with his earnings from acting, live performances and endorsement projects, he's been able to acquire the necessities—and luxuries—of life. He indulges in expensive sports like competitive sailing, for example.

The only element missing in the picture, he grins, is a girlfriend. Just like his steadily rising career, Diether shares that he also plans for his love life. "Yes, I'm ready for a serious relationship," he nods. "But I'm not looking for it. I'm just waiting for the right person."

"*Nakakapagod na kasing mag*-date," he complains. "I just want someone who understands me."

Mainstay

Meantime, having a loaded show biz sked keeps this prized asset of Talent Center occupied. He's a mainstay on "Recuerdo de Amor" and the musical variety program, "Asap."

He is Assunta de Rossi's leading man in Regal Films' latest offering, "Bahid," which also stars Eddie Garcia and Dina Bonnevie, who reportedly got very close to Diether. "Well, I make it a point to be friendly with my co-stars," he says, trying to evade the issue by flashing his pearly whites.

Seriously now, Diether shares that he learns a lot from his co-stars. Eddie, for example, has told him to love his work and to come to the set prepared and organized. And Dina, whom the younger actor describes as "*sobrang bait*," has advised him to "think outside of show biz."

Right location

He's thinking of expanding his entrepreneurial reach by finding the right location for his own branch of Fix Bench Salon, which he endorses. So far, he's opened One Center Spa in Banawe and a Nature's Flow water refilling station in Pag-asa. He's also a part of the group behind the glossy women's magazine You.

Diether hates to be idle, so whenever he finds himself with nothing to do, he lets his creative juices flow on paper. He's written a storyline for Star Cinema. "I'm ready to write the script," he nods. "I'm just waiting for the go signal." He's also planning to put up his own production company.

This Christmas, he will treat 100 children from different orphanages to a Disney show and goodies at the Araneta Coliseum, with the support of the companies whose products he endorses.

The rock

From page E6

Or, at the very least, he should have a say on the manner of his death. If he wants soaring classical music to be played as he marches onward to the pearly gates, he shouldn't be prevented from the fulfillment of that simple wish.

My nephrologist gave me the impression that she was in total agreement with me and I shall eternally be grateful for her sensitivity and compassion. Quite unfortunately, the doctor assigned to do the actual operation must have felt that my requests were petty and trivial.

Journey

He didn't even talk to me to comfort me and allay whatever fears I may have had at that precise moment that I was embarking on a journey that could lead me to the Lord's Kingdom. When I asked him if it was just a simple procedure, I wanted some kind of reassurance from him, a confirmation of what my nephrologists already told me.

Instead, he said it was a serious operation and that getting it out was more troublesome than putting it in. That sent all my alarm bells clanging in my ears. Immediately, I knew that even if he was the most efficient, most knowledgeable, most experienced doctor, he lacked one thing: a compassionate heart.

And he confirmed this when he injected something just below my shoulders and I screamed like I never did before. Then, he peeked at me and I saw that he was smirking—like he was telling me, "So, you didn't want anesthesia, huh?"

Then, while I was lying there helplessly, trying to keep the tears from falling and summoning up all the courage that the Lord had given me, he paused to ask me, "Ah, you want music?" I wanted to rearrange his face. But then, that would have been doing him a service because he wasn't even good-looking.

What has all this told me? And why am I telling it to you? Well, I'd like to believe that God allowed that experience to happen to me for reasons that may be beyond my human comprehension—but whatever those reasons are, they are for my good.

Parable

Have you heard about the parable of the rock that couldn't be moved? There is this story about a man whom God roused from sleep because He wanted him to push a huge rock He had put in front of his house. The man obediently did what he was told. Everyday and every night, he pushed and pushed the rock. The days became weeks, the weeks became months, and the months became a year—and he still pushed the rock.

Satan sauntered by and taunted him, calling him stupid for pushing the rock for a year, to no avail—for, despite his valiant efforts, the rock wouldn't move, not even a fraction of an inch.

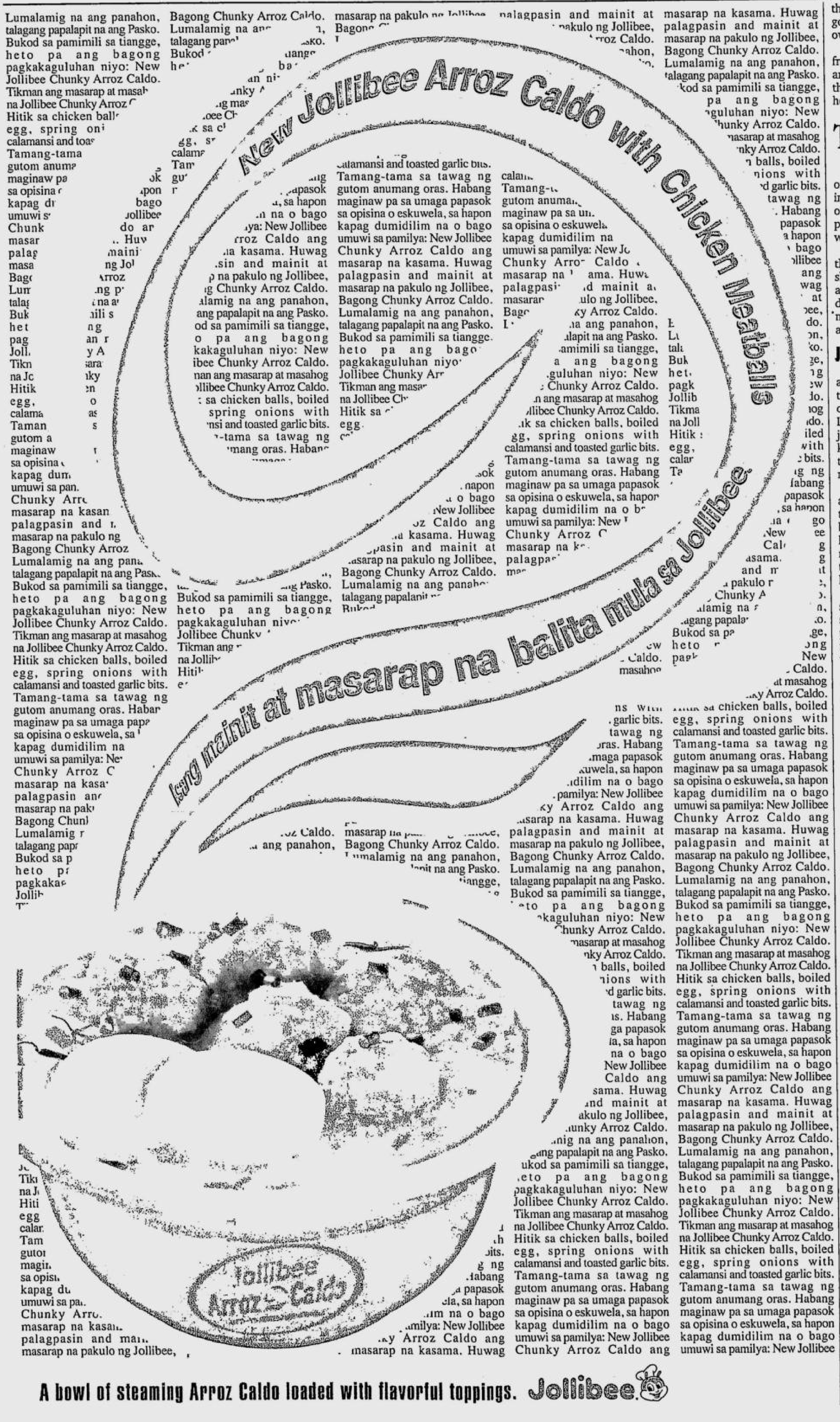
The man went to God and declared that he didn't want to push the rock anymore. "Why?" God inquired. He replied that he was a failure because he'd been pushing the rock for a year but it still wouldn't move.

God tenderly looked him in the eye and said, "My child, I told you to push the rock. I didn't tell you to move it. Only I have the power to move it." Forthwith, God pointed a finger at the rock and directed it to move—and it did.

Then, God continued, "You think you failed because the rock didn't move. But look at your hands and arms, they have become stronger. Your muscles and sinews, they have become bigger. Your shoulders have broadened. Your legs have toughened. Before, you were half the man you are now. You think you have failed. For me, you have succeeded."

Clara, my beloved child, it has been very, very difficult lately. But I'm pushing my rock. And I know I'm not failing…

For your insights and comments: badids2000@yahoo.com>


New Jollibee Arroz Caldo with Chicken Meatballs
Isang mainit at masarap na balita mula sa Jollibee.
Jollibee Arroz Caldo

Lumalamig na ang panahon, talagang papalapit na ang Pasko. Bukod sa pamimili sa tiangge, heto pa ang bagong pagkakaguluhan niyo: New Jollibee Chunky Arroz Caldo. Tikman ang masarap at masahog na Jollibee Chunky Arroz Caldo. Hitik sa chicken balls, boiled egg, spring onions with calamansi and toasted garlic bits. Tamang-tama sa tawag ng gutom anumang oras. Habang maginaw pa sa umaga papasok sa opisina o eskuwela, sa hapon kapag dumidilim na o bago umuwi sa pamilya: New Jollibee Chunky Arroz Caldo ang masarap na kasama. Huwag palagpasin and mainit at masarap na pakulo ng Jollibee, Bagong Chunky Arroz Caldo.

A bowl of steaming Arroz Caldo loaded with flavorful toppings. Jollibee

‘Punch-Drunk Love’ is disjointed yet strangely beautiful

SANDLER. Complex character.

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—I love Paul Thomas Anderson’s movies. I loved “Boogie Nights.” I loved “Magnolia”—thought it was the best movie of 1999. Even the frog storm, which many decried as pretentious, was OK with me; by then, he’d won me over.

Leaps of faith

Three years later, Anderson’s eagerly awaited “Punch-Drunk Love” is like one frog storm after another. Audacious and disjointed, yet strangely beautiful, it asks us to make several leaps of faith, but doesn’t really reward us for our perseverance.

Anderson does, however, draw from Adam Sandler the most surprising, moving work we’ve ever seen from the comedian. It’s enough to make you forget that Sandler has built a career on movies that rely on overheated bulldogs and children’s urinary habits for cheap, easy laughs.

Here, he’s cast aside his usual quirks: the high-pitched voice that drops to a gravelly growl, the nervous shufflestep, the funny little songs about his mother and Hanukkah. Anderson made for him a complex character, and Sandler made him complete human being.

Odd choice

The star of “Little Nicky” and “Big Daddy” may seem an odd choice to play the lead in a romantic comedy, but then again, “Punch-Drunk Love” isn’t exactly romantic. And it isn’t exactly a comedy, either. It’s hard to describe what it is.

It could be a psychedelic take on the Technicolor films of the 1940s and ’50s; it could just be the story of a guy who buys a bunch of pudding. Either way, it’s much shorter and lighter than previous films from Anderson, who, at just 32, has made his name with long, emotionally draining roller-coaster rides.

Sandler stars as Barry Egan, who sells custom plumbing supplies from a nondescript warehouse in the San Fernando Valley, the setting of all of Anderson’s films. (The plunger with dice on the handle is a huge hit in Las Vegas.)

Barry figures out a way to rack up 1.25 million frequent flyer miles from buying $3,000 worth of Healthy Choice pudding cups—something a real-life person did.

Not that Barry ever flies anywhere—but he could, if he wanted to get away from his seven sisters, whose years of nagging and smothering have rendered him a social misfit. Shy almost to the point of paralysis most times, he flies into inexplicable fits of rage at others.

One night, from his bland little apartment, he calls a phone sex line because he needs someone to talk to; he tried confiding in his brother-in-law (Robert Smigel), who he thought was a doctor, but is really a dentist, proving how clueless Barry is.

Breathy voice

The next morning, the breathy voice on the other end of the line calls back from Utah and tries to extort money from him. When Barry tries to wriggle away, her boss (Anderson regular Philip Seymour Hoffman) sends four brothers to Los Angeles to shake him down.

At the same time, Barry is falling in love—hence the title—with Lena (Emily Watson), a co-worker of one of Barry’s sisters (an extremely natural Mary Lynn Rajskub).

Why Lena falls for Barry is a bit of a mystery—she confesses she saw his photo and asked to meet him, but what did she see in him? Anderson never fully develops her character, but that’s not a huge deal; what she represents in terms of Barry’s transformation is more important than who she is, and Watson conveys such sweetness and vulnerability, you want their romance to flourish.

All this probably doesn’t make sense, and Anderson’s sometimes overbearing use of sound clouds things further. A phone rings, and it’s so loud, it’s ear-splitting. Barry destroys the men’s bathroom during a date with Lena, and it’s thunderous. And Jon Brion’s score sometimes reaches a level of cacophony that covers the characters’ words.

But why? Then again, why do frogs fall from the sky? If you’re a fan of Anderson’s work, you’ll just open your umbrella and step bravely into the downpour.

“Punch-Drunk Love,” a Columbia Pictures release, runs 95 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four. *AP*

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Catching up with Carlos Agassi

By Edmund L. Sicam

AGASSI. “Dekada ’70” is his first filmfest movie.

WE caught up with Carlos Agassi recently and asked him what he’s up to these days. Well, he’s still with the Hunks—as a matter of fact, they have a series of shows in the States.

And his new album will be out in January. His idol is Will Smith, a rap artist like him. Also, “*Malapit na matapos yung* ‘Sa Dulo’ . . . *sa* last week of January *din.*”

Carlos is also part of one of the most talked-about movies of the year, “Dekada 70.” “*Ako yung anak na* opposite *ni* Piolo (Pascual) *na palagi nag-aaway, siya yung* open-minded . . . *ako yung mahilig sa* chicks.” Dimples Romana plays his wife.

What did he learn from his co-stars, acting greats Vilma Santos and Christopher de Leon? “*Tito* Boyet taught me that there are no small roles, only small actors. It depends on how you portray the role.” He admired them for the way they worked—“*Ibang klase ang* aura *nila.*”

How did he internalize his soldier character? “We had meetings, readings, story conferences. We had to watch videos from the past, *yung* characters *na pwede naming gawin* . . . *tapos inisa-isa kami ni direk*…”

Excited

This is Carlos’ first time to be in a filmfest movie, and he’s excited. “It’s my biggest film ever, and it’s quite an experience. *Ang dami kong natutunan kay direk* Chito.”

Since he’s only turning 23, there’s no way he experienced Martial Law first hand, so how does he internalize something like that? “By watching tapes, documentaries . . . reading…”

How about being part of the Hunks, what’s that like? “*Nung nagsimula kami, may* rivalry. *Pero nung pinagsama kami, bigla kaming nag*-bond. We just complemented each other—*para kaming* brothers *talaga. Lagi kaming magkasama*, we help each other out, we give each other advice. We’re not competing anymore.”

Do they have a leader? Not really, he says, they all emerge as leaders in certain fields. They know each other’s strengths and weaknesses. When they tour, the loudest “I love yous” are always for different people. In Hong Kong, it was “I love Bernard!” In San Francisco, it was “I love Diether!” In Los Angeles, it was “I love Piolo!”

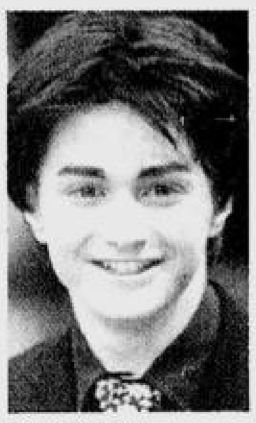
Next year, Carlos will co-produce a movie for the Hunks with Star Cinema. Yet another hearty serving to add to his already full plate. Carlos smiles and simply welcomes it.

E-mail: pr_saturday_special@inquirer.com.ph

SATURDAY Special

'Harry Potter' kids may quit after third film

By Larry Fine


RADCLIFFE. Growing up fast.

NEW YORK—The young stars of the blockbuster Harry Potter films will probably call it quits after the third installment of the series, director Chris Columbus said on Tuesday.

Sidekicks

"If I were a betting man I'd say they'll probably stop after three," Columbus told Reuters about 12-year-old Daniel Radcliffe (Harry Potter) and his sidekicks Emma Watson (Hermione Granger), 12, and Rupert Grint (Ron Weasley), 13.

The talented young trio, who starred in last year's "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone"—the second highest grossing movie of all time after "Titanic"—reprise their roles in "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets."

The movie was titled "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" outside the United States.

The Britons will portray the youthful wizards again in the film of the third book of J.K. Rowling's phenomenally successful series, "The Prisoner of Azkaban," which begins filming in March and is expected to be released in June 2004.

HARRY/ F2

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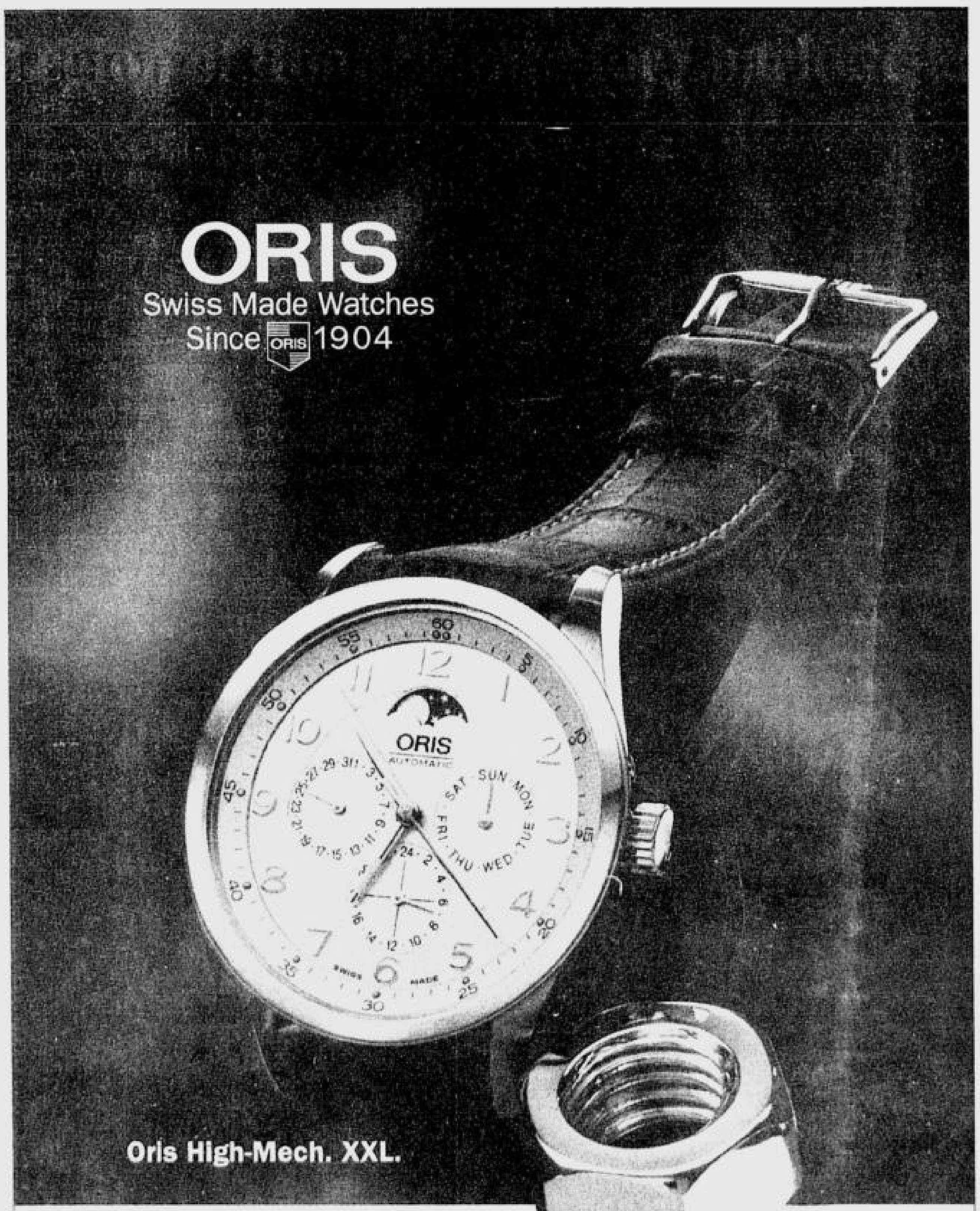

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Andrea Bocelli
11 **8 Mile - OST**
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Las Ketchup
13 **Stripped**
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15 **Audioslave**
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17 **Let Go**
Avril Lavigne
18 **Jazz Café Series: Cappuccino**
Various Artists
19 **Chillout Project**
Various Artists
20 **Masters Of Chant Chapter III**
Gregorian
keyword: *gold*
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Chicago
22 **Jazz Café Series: Latte**
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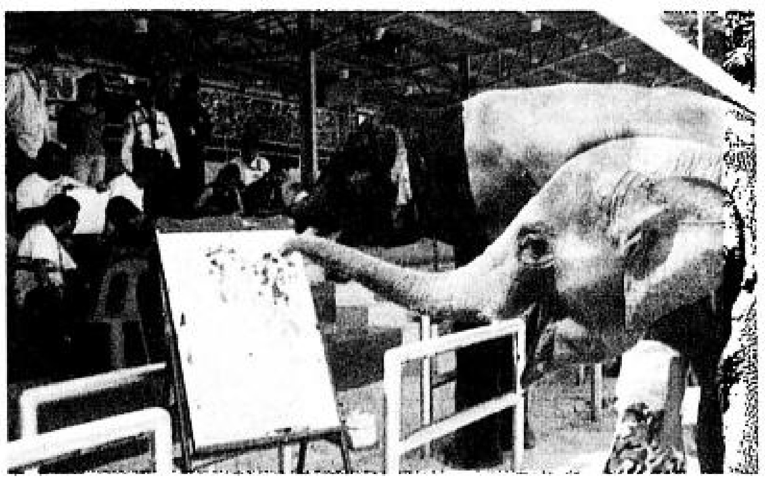
Elephant World show features pachyderms as antic entertainers

By Nestor U. Torre



PACHYDERM AS PICASSO. Baby elephant delights crowd with its brushwork.

IF you want to sample a different kind of show, why not head for the Araneta Center, where the Elephant World show is being staged in a specially constructed performing area near the Araneta Coliseum?

Tricks

We made it a point to catch the act recently because we had seen an elephant show in Thailand a couple of years ago, and it had blown us away with the tricks that the well-trained animals performed, to the delight of tourists from many countries in the audience.

Well, the Elephant World show also makes use of elephants and their mahouts (trainers) from Thailand, but their act wasn't as intricate and eventful as the one we saw in their home country.

Still, it turned out to be worth our while, so we were glad we went. It was especially enjoyed by the little children in the audience, who were thrilled to feed bananas to the younger elephants, and even to play games like tug-of-war with the biggest member of the troupe.

ELEPHANT "basketball player" lines up shot.

Slow start

The afternoon show we caught got off to a slow start because many of the members of the audience arrived late. Then, there was a front act by some streetchildren and disabled performers. While the lead singers had good, strong voices, the show wasn't related to the main act of the afternoon, so it didn't fit in.

By the time the Elephant World show finally started, we were bored out of our skulls. But the grand entrance of the eight elephants revived our flagging spirits. There's something wise and noble about elephants that makes them come across as special creatures to us.

True enough, the tricks and routines they performed with their mahouts were both impressive and droll. They started by naughtily tickling some volunteers from the audience, then delicately stepped over them as they lay supine on mats.

Painting session

Another act that delighted the audience was a painting session, during which the pachyderms showed off their "artistic" talent. They held their brushes by the fingerlike tips of their trunks, and made confident strokes that produced "abstract" works with a sort of Jackson Pollock feel to them.

An entire section had the elephants playing various sports, and the kids in the audience cheered whenever an elephant was able to dunk a ball into a basket.

Aside form the pachyderms' routines, the audience loved just getting to touch the noble and docile beasts as they went up close to the bleachers for some "audience participation" encounters.

Cute ways

At first, some of the kids were scared of the huge creatures, but the baby pachyderms in particular quickly won them over with their cute ways, and by fluttering their long eyelashes at them.

As this friendly interaction between young humans and elephants was taking place, we saw an additional value to the Elephant World show: Not only does it provide a different kind of entertainment, but it also introduces little kids to animals that may initially be unfamiliar to them, but soon become their friends. Would that other rapproachments could be so naturally and sweetly attained!

STANDING, from left, Chay Santiago, ChuChay Fernandez, Ellen Tordesillas, Arianne Perez, Domini Torevillas, Nelly Sindayen, Malou Rosal, Angelita Consignado-Lee, Alena Torres, Deedee Siytangco and Sonny Siytangco. Kneeling, from left, Juvey Velasco, Nicandro Fucoy, the author, Cemex officials Juris Soliman, Ariel Mendoza and Lai Querijero.

Visit to Cemex plant in Cebu

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

RECENTLY, I joined the Women in Media group (journalists who meet at Westin Philippine Plaza's "Bulong Pulungan" every Tuesday) in visiting Cemex Philippines' Apo Cement Corp. plant based in Tina-an, Naga, Cebu.

Subsidiary

Cemex Philippines is a subsidiary of Cemex S.A. de C.V. of Mexico, one of the largest cement companies in the world. It operates in 30 countries and has an extensive network of distribution centers and marine terminals. It is a leading global producer and marketer of cement and ready-mix products, with operations primarily concentrated in the world's most dynamic cement markets.

Cemex entered Asia by buying into Rizal Cement and its subsidiary, Solid Cement Corp. and eventually bought into Apo Cement Corp.

We were taken around by the plant manager, Ariel Mendoza. With him were three young men, all executives in training—Pol Joseph Garing, George Tormes and Carlos Monsivais.

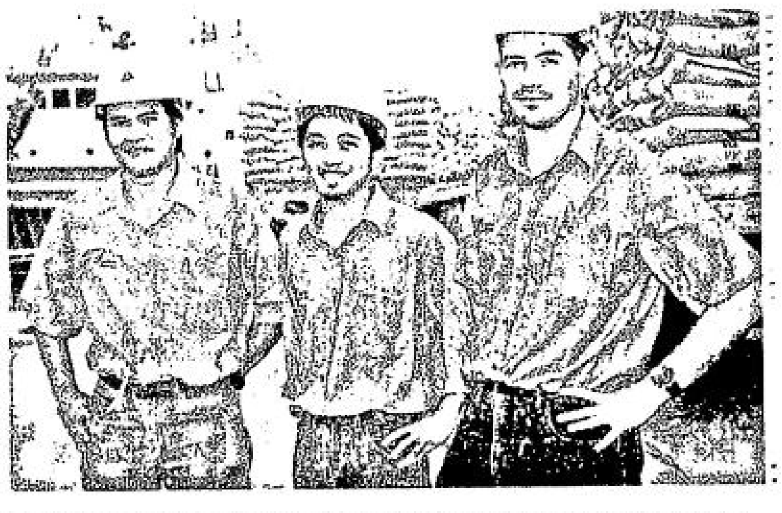
Mexican

Carlos is Mexican, cross-posted to observe and learn about Philippine operations. But so sorry, girls, there is an Esmeralda waiting for him in Mexico and Carlos is faithful.

Local plants have the highest score among Cemex plants worldwide for "Total Production Maintenance." That means the Philippines has become the benchmark for maintenance implementation for the entire Cemex global operation. We visited the quarry site and computerized Central Control Room where all major activities are screened for possible hitches. There is also a Quality Assurance Section to ensure the highest standards are maintained.

Then they brought us to a fenced-off area with a new gymnasium, chapel, a renovated multi-purpose hall, training center, day-care center, etc. Cemex is world-class, indeed!

PLANT manager Ariel Mendoza.



FROM left, George Tormes, Pol Joseph Garing and Carlos Monsivais, management trainees.

'Harry Potter' . . .

From page F1

Worn out

Columbus, who directed the first two Potter movies, decided against directing the third, saying he was worn out and wanted to spend more time with his family. He will still be on the set daily as producer of the next Potter film.

Columbus praised the young stars, but said they might be ready for a break after the rigors of doing three major movies in quick succession.

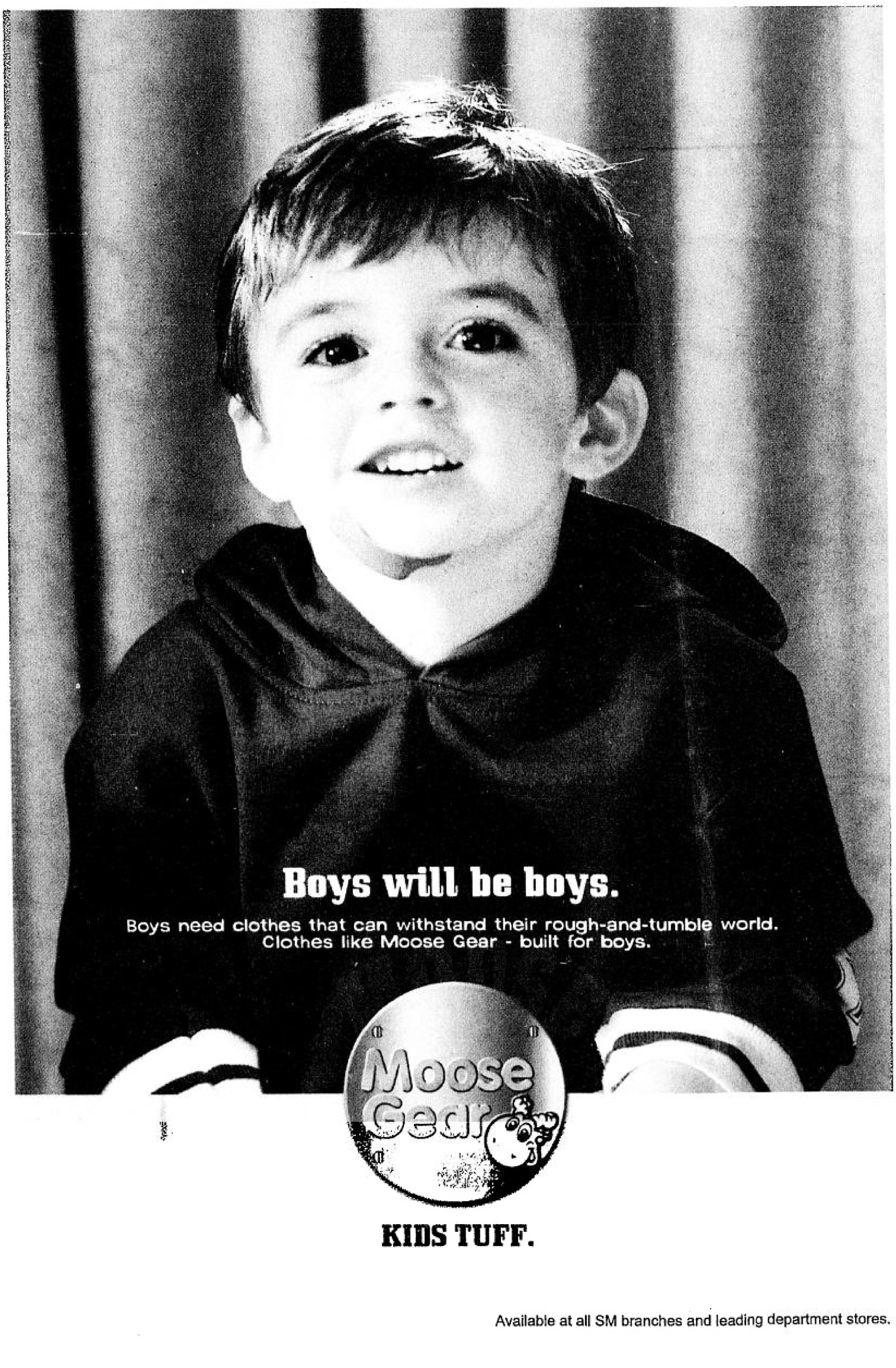
"If they ask my opinion, my advice would be to go back to being kids," said Columbus, whose film version of "Sorcerer's Stone" grossed more than $965 million.

Rowling has written four Potter books with the fifth of her planned seven-volume series expected to be published next year.

The first four Potter books, published by Bloomsbury in Britain and Scholastic in the United States, have sold 175 million copies worldwide.

Asked about his future plans regarding playing the bespectacled Potter, Radcliffe told a news conference on Tuesday, "We're all definitely doing the third film. After that, who knows?" *Reuters*

GRINT AND WATSON. Ready for a break after doing three major movies in quick succession.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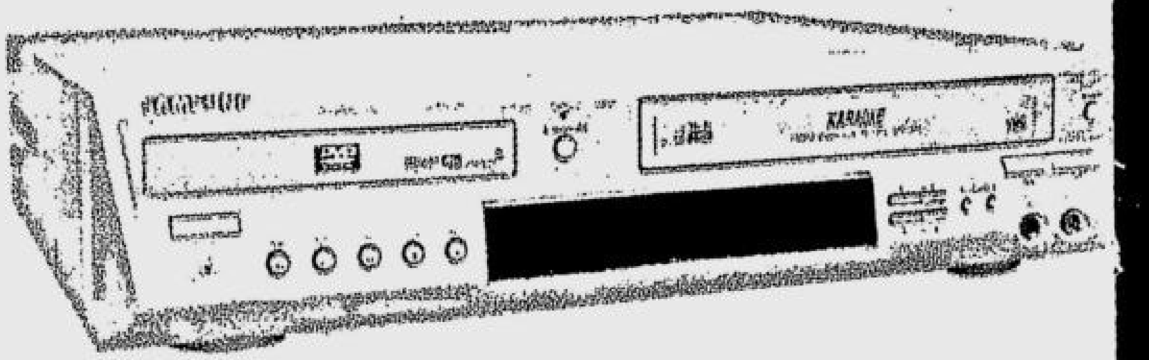

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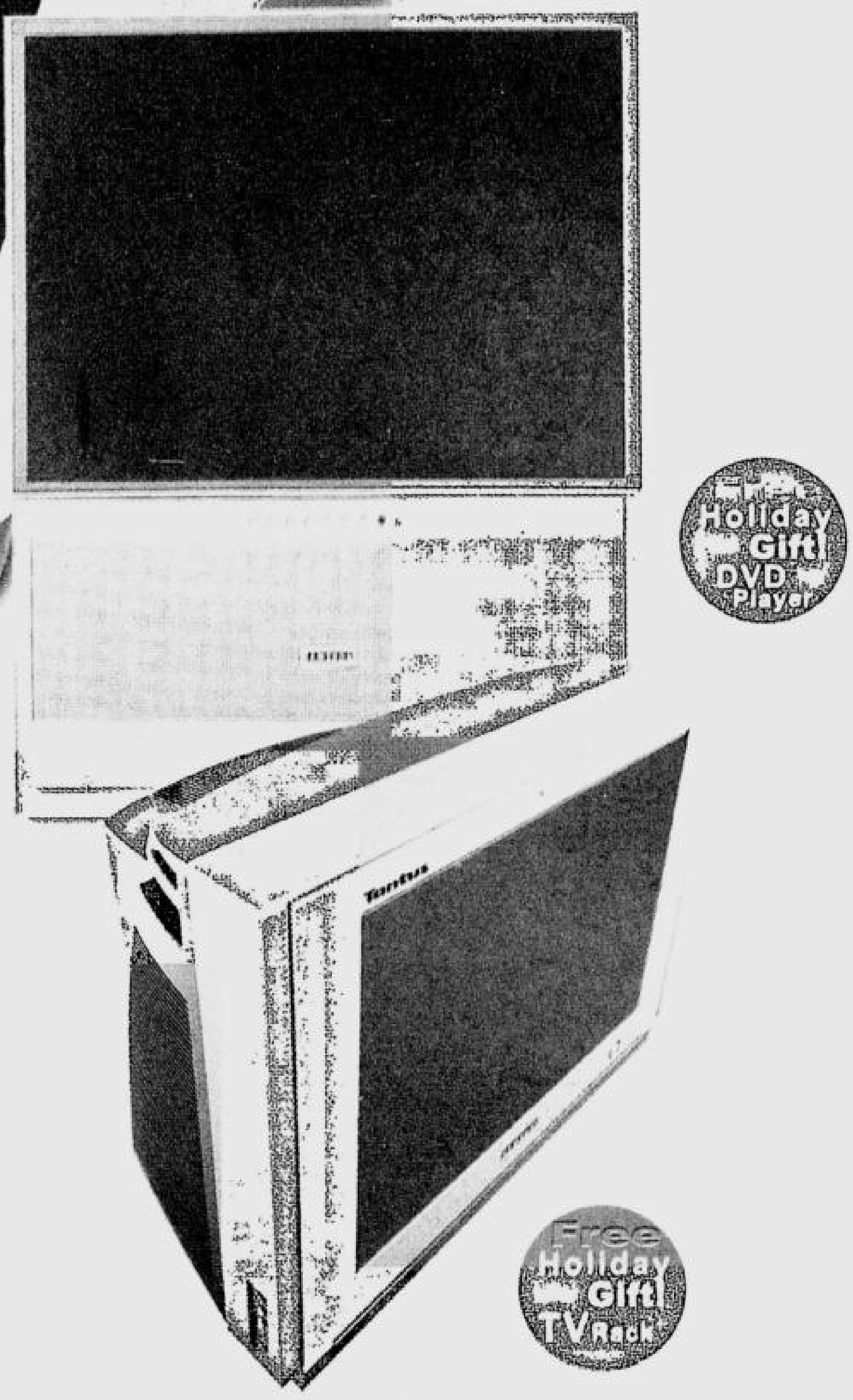

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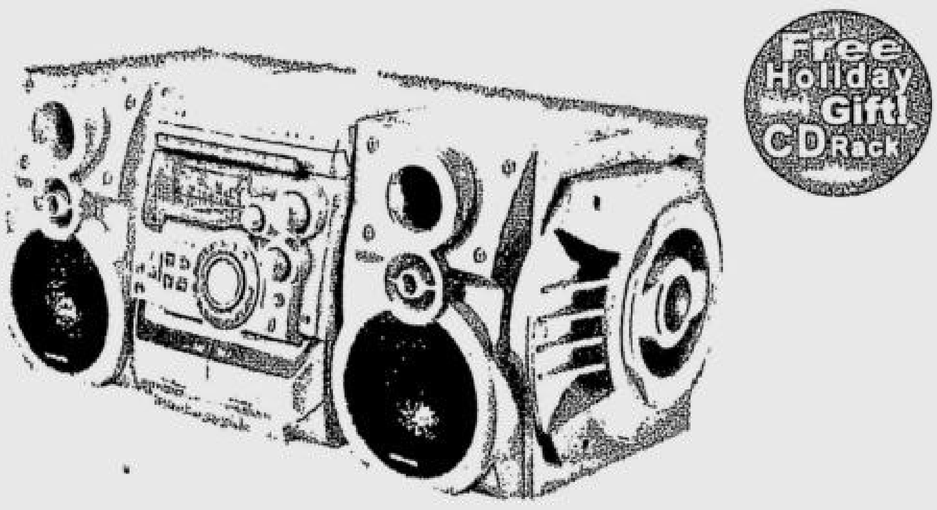

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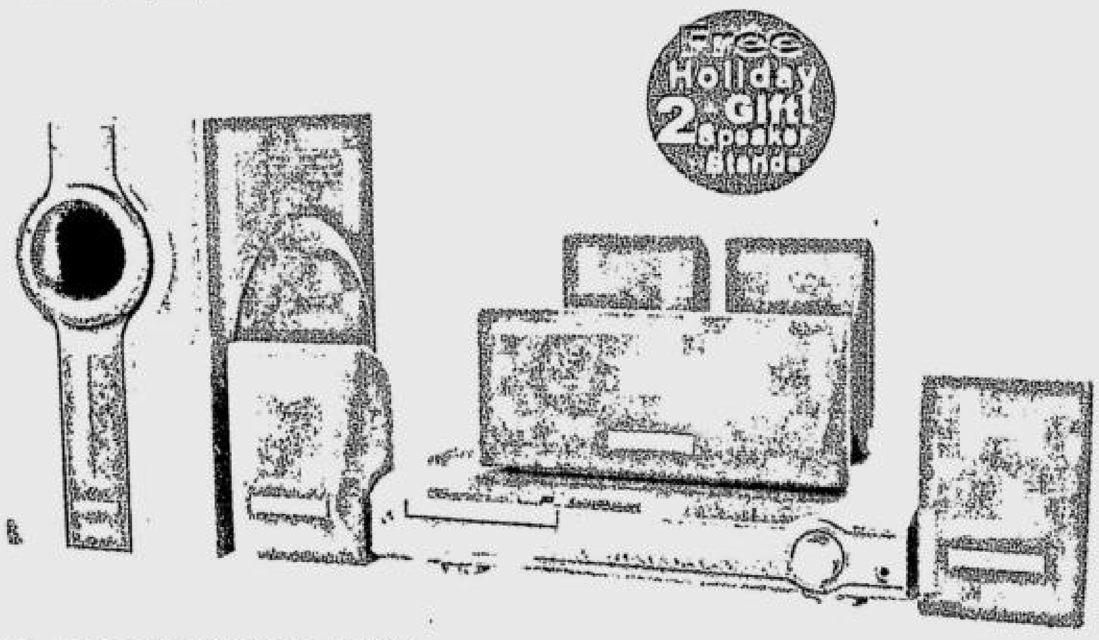

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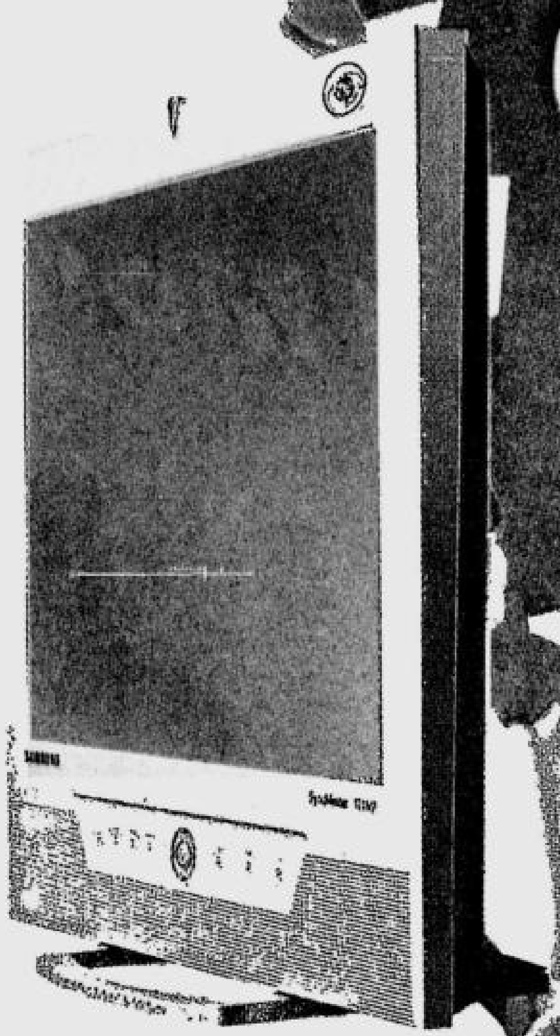

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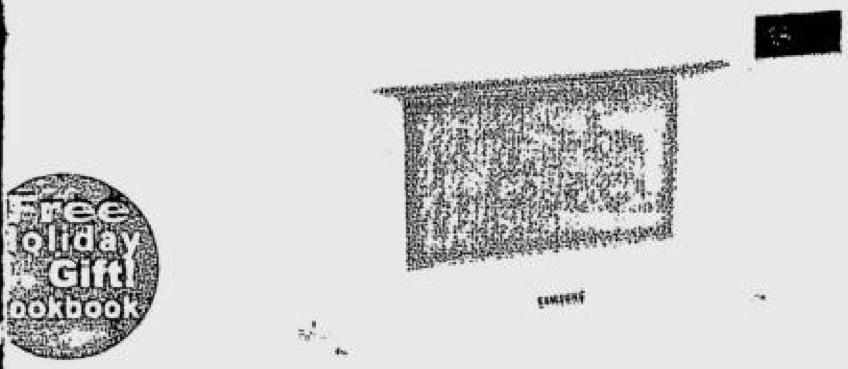

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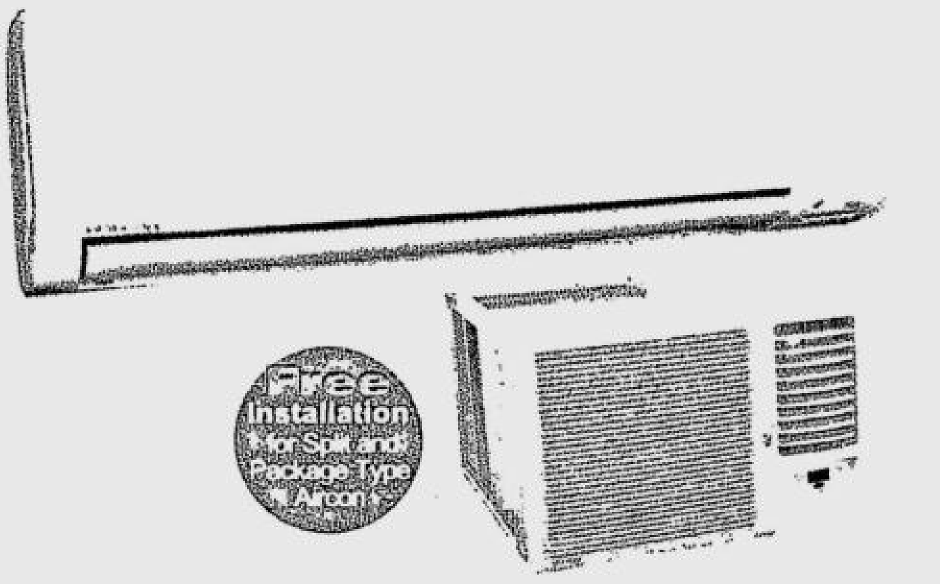

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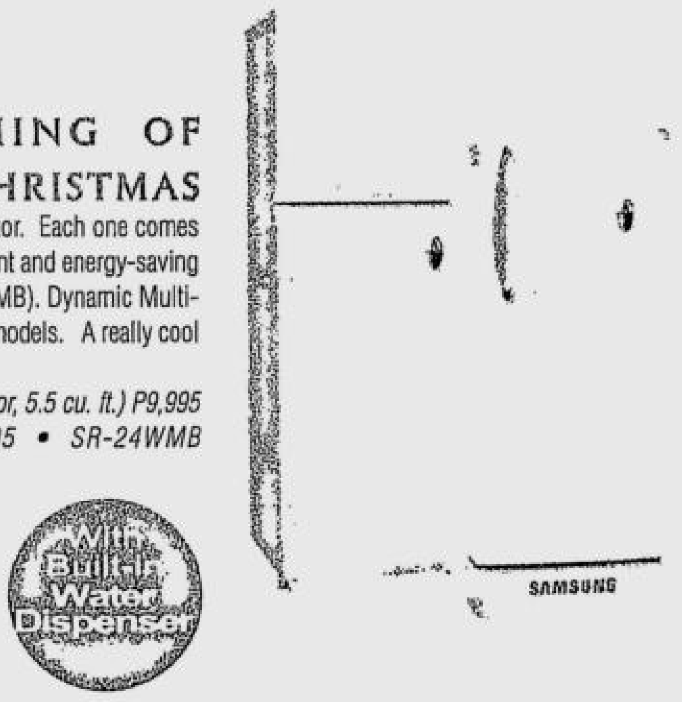

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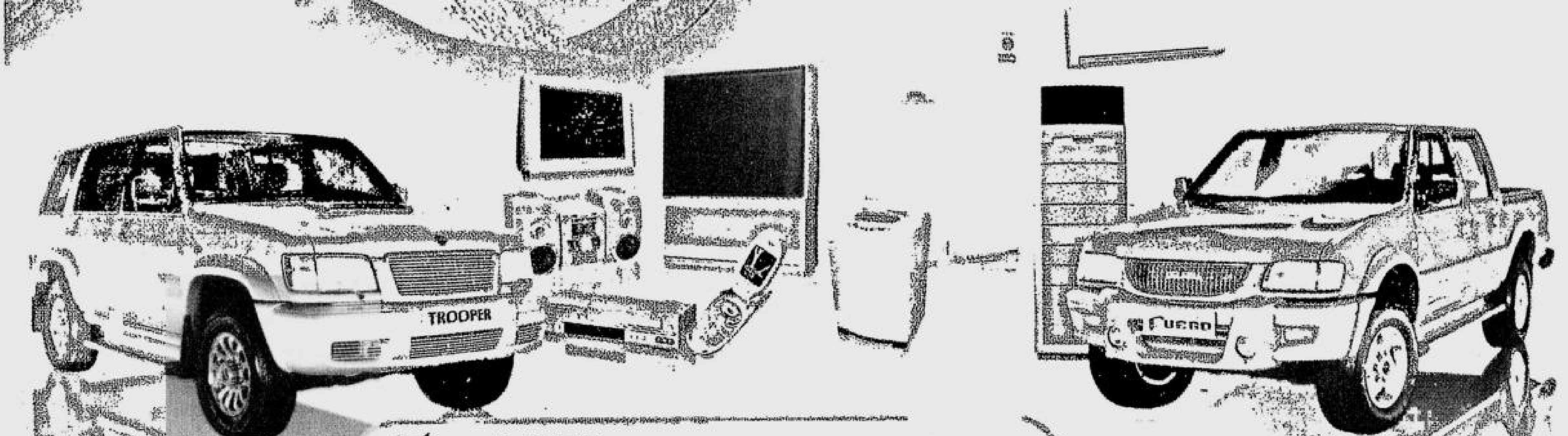

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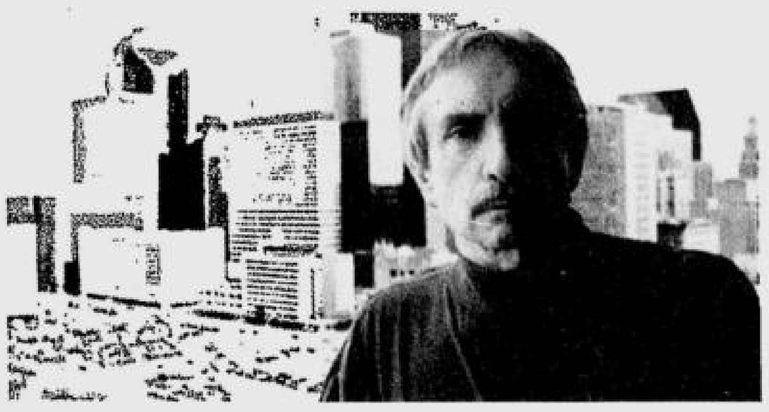
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3658. Series of 2002.

Keen analysis of Edward Albee's dramatic canon

By Noelani Torre



ALBEE. Rich boy makes good.

EDWARD Albee has been one of the most talked-about playwrights in international and American theater for almost 50 years. Ever since the debut of his one-act play "The Zoo Story" in 1958, he has made audiences and critics alike sit up and take notice.

Praise and blame

According to Richard Amacher in his book "Edward Albee" (Twayne), the playwright has been subjected "to considerable praise and blame—some of it deserved, and some largely unmerited.

"He has seemingly thrived on the critics' misunderstanding and stupidity—and, in some instances, on the downright abuse they have fired at him. And, on occasion, he has drawn spectacular attention to himself by firing back a salvo or two at his detractors."

"The life of Edward Albee reads like a Horatio Alger story," writes Amacher. But unlike those poor Alger orphans who rose to fame and fortune, Albee's life is "the fascinating and wonderfully ironic tale of rich boy makes good."

Millionaires

Two weeks after he was born in 1928, Edward Albee was adopted by millionaires Reed and Frances Albee. His adoptive grandfather, Edward Franklin Albee (for whom he was named), was part-owner of a nationwide chain of vaudeville theaters called the Keith-Albee Theater Circuit. Thus young Albee was exposed to theater at an early age.

His childhood years were also luxurious. A magazine article reported that his world then consisted of "servants, tutors, riding lessons; winters in Miami, summers sailing on the Sound. There was a Rolls to bring him, snuggled in lap robes, to matinees in the city; an inexhaustible wardrobe housed in a closet big as an ordinary room…"

Albee's schooling was quite erratic, though, as he transferred from one school to another and was even kicked out from several. "Faint sparks of hope, however," said Amacher, "now and then illuminated Albee's hectic career through the long, dark valley of adolescence."

All this biographical information on the playwright can be read in the first chapter of Amacher's book on the man, his works, and his literary theories. Though a trifle bookish, Amacher's treatise on Albee is never boring and is certainly quite informative.

Objective

It also helps that he neither gushes, nor scorns the playwright and his works. "I have not taken a position as an Albeephile nor as an Albeephobe," he writes. "I have tried to be objective."

Thus he lets the playwright and his works speak for themselves, but without leaving us to flounder unguided through Albee's canon. On the subject of Albee's extensive literary and artistic theories, for example, he helpfully provides categories of the writer's chief interests, such as Broadway and Hollywood, the audience and the critic, art and reality, etc.

It is no wonder, then, that this slim but erudite volume never leaves the reading lists of those wanting to know more about "the offensive playwright."

"The health of a nation can be determined by the art it demands," said Albee. And this statement, according to Amacher, is the dramatists's "attack on the existing—barely existing—American theater as represented by its two major establishments, Broadway and Hollywood." Albee made this statement years ago, but unfortunately, it still holds true today.

Another Albee statement that remains valid is about audience responsibility. "We hear so often of the responsibility of the artist to his audience," he said, "but far too little is ever said about the responsibility of an audience—of a society, if you will—to the people who fashion its entertainments."

Analysis

Aside from a general discussion of Albee's theories, Amacher also devotes a chapter each to an analysis of the author's plays. "The Zoo Story," he tells us, is a "classical plot in Central Park."

Looking at the play from an Aristotelian point of view, he concludes that in it "the absurdity of survival in the 20th century is dramatized with peculiarly Grecian effectiveness."

Amacher, as a matter of fact, frequently uses the "Poetics" as his take-off point as he explains:

"By using a combination of explication *de texte* and Aristotelian part-whole analysis, I have aimed to give the reader as complete a sense of the play as it is possible for him to have without his actually reading it and seeing it in the theater—one of which I expect him to do."

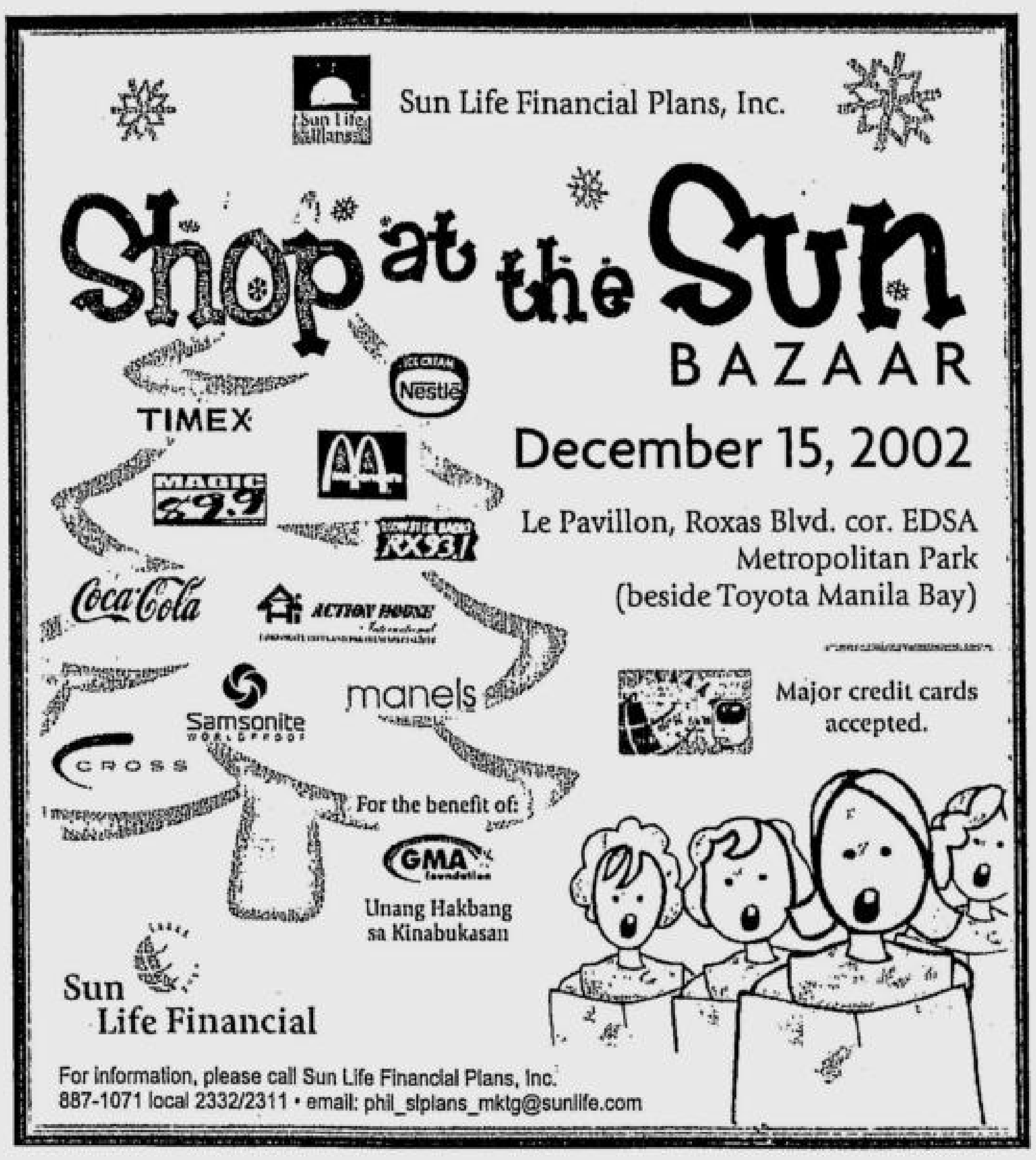
In our case, we will have to content ourselves with reading the plays since stagings of Albee's works are rare in our part of the world. Not that he isn't popular. In fact, though pushing 80, the playwright is still going strong. His most recent successful release, "The Goat," won the 2002 Tony Award for Best Play.

Albee is most known, however, for his three-act drama "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" With this play, wrote Amacher, the writer "achieved a more or less secure position for himself in the history of modern American drama."

New development

Amacher also considers this play important historically because "it marked some kind of

KEEN/ F8



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1919 Series of 2002

20 years of Martin Nievera

By Mona Gonzalez

MARTIN Nievera stood at the back of the room, toyed with his ear, then fiddled with the bald head of someone seated in the audience. He has been giving us 20 years of this usual playfulness, whether on or off camera—plus 20 years of music.

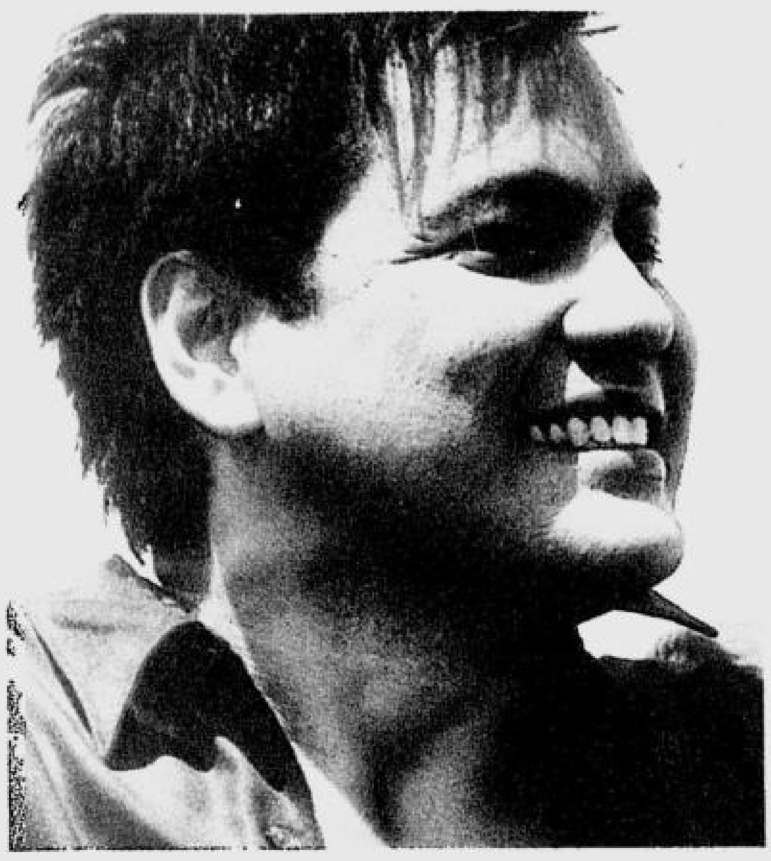
Success

We were at the Country Waffles restaurant on Annapolis st. attending Martin's press conference to mark the success of "Chasing Time," his latest CD.

The new album includes four songs by Brian McKnight. A fifth song, slated for Volume II of "Chasing Time," was taped in Brian's LA studio. It is a duet with English and Tagalog parts, sung by Martin and Brian.

Not bad, but for Martin, it's still not enough. "Have you ever made love?" he playfully asked one reporter. "When you make love there's a beginning, a middle, and a climax. In my career, I haven't climaxed yet."

Twenty years before, Martin was young, eager, vulnerable, and enamored with his father. Back then a reporter asked, "Are you ready for the intrigues of the business?" Martin innocently said, "Sure, my Dad is here to help me."



NIEVERA. In his element as a balladeer.

Now, Martin confidently strode on stage and playfully started the ball rolling by saying, "I'll ask you the questions. This is a different kind of presscon." When he reflected on the last 20 years, he said what kept him going through the rough and smooth times were his love for music, and hamming it up onstage.

Dream

One elusive dream that Martin openly admitted to from the very beginning was to make it overseas. At one point he sent his demo to several recording companies in the States. "After hearing my songs, they'd always presume I was black," Martin says. One man even commented, "This is the first black singer I've listened to where I could actually understand the lyrics." With "Chasing Time," the route to international fame begins in Asia. The album will be distributed in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore.

Personally, we don't think Brian McKnight's songs are the highlight of the album, although they are good. Our favorites are local compositions—"Chasing Time" penned by Louie Ocampo, and "Isang Saglit, Isang Sandali" by Moy Ortiz and Edith Gallardo.

Why? Because we believe that Martin is in his element as a balladeer. The quality of Martin's voice, his way of interpreting ballads, and his spirit come off best here.

Another highlight of the album is "Nassan Ka Man," with lyrics by George Canseco (music by Louie Ocampo). "The music came first," Martin recalls, adding, "George liked the melody so much that he wrote the lyrics."

Lessons

After 20 years in the business, here are some lessons young hopefuls may want to pick up from Martin: Make people laugh. Make each member of the press feel special. Clowning around is serious business. Be all things to all people. And, while performing, sweat profusely!

We don't know why. But Martin's been doing it for 20 years, so it must work!

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Per DTI NCR Permit No. 4866. Series of 2002.

Keen . . .

From page F7

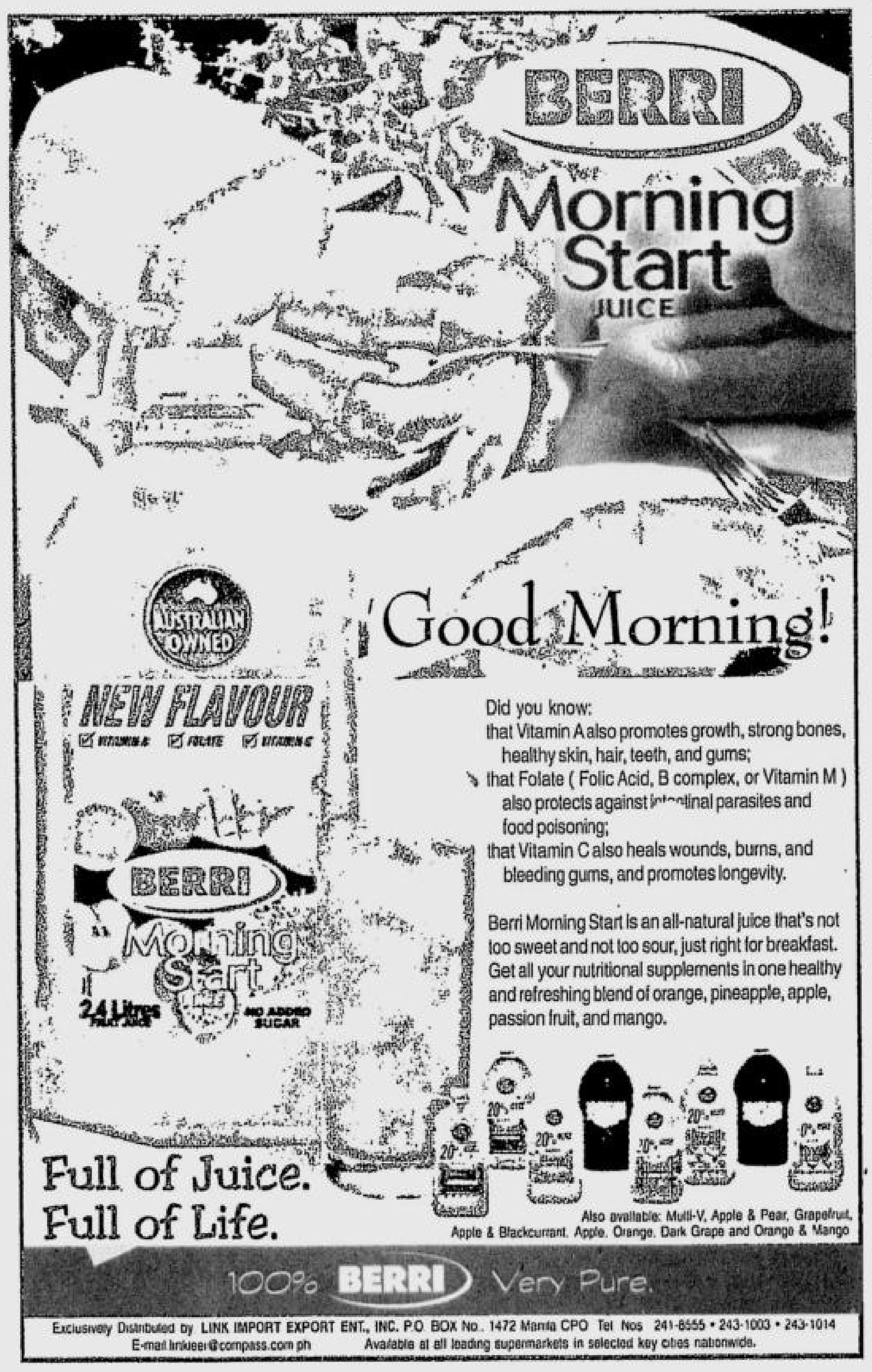
new development on a popular Elizabethan theme of war between the sexes, such as we find in 'The Taming of the Shrew' and in the merry war between Beatrice and Benedick in 'Much Ado About Nothing' by Shakespeare."

This play was quite controversial upon its release not only because of its absurdist and brutally honest take on modern relationships, but also because two members of the Pulitzer Prize committee resigned in protest when the play's nomination wasn't unanimously accepted.

Albee bagged the much-coveted prize, however, with his "A Delicate Balance," after a string of no-hitters (mainly unsuccessful adaptations of other writers' novels).

Greater depth

This play, writes Amacher, "is in some ways the nearest thing to a traditional well-made play of Scribe or Sardou that Albee has ever composed. It recalls their suspenseful and cleverly constructed plots, but it exhibits a greater depth of characterization than their plays do."



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Special

Bollywood to make film on Indira Gandhi

GANDHI. From shy girl to powerful leader.

By Maria Abraham

BOMBAY—An Indian producer will soon start shooting a film about controversial former prime minister Indira Gandhi that aims to portray her transformation from a shy girl into one of India's most powerful and dynamic leaders.

Producer Nittin Keni said the Hindi-language film, "Indira Gandhi—A Tryst With Destiny," would be modeled on British filmmaker Richard Attenborough's Oscar-winning film about India's independence hero Mahatma Gandhi, who was not related to Indira.

Human drama

"The film will focus on the human drama of how a shy girl became an international leader," Keni told Reuters. "Our basic intention is to make it an accessible, commercial film like Attenborough's 'Gandhi.'" The film, which he expects to finish by the end of next year, will be released worldwide in dubbed or subtitled versions.

The country's only woman prime minister and the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, Indira Gandhi presided over the fortunes of the world's largest democracy for 15 years before she was assassinated in 1984 by her own security guards.

Three terms

She served three terms, during which she steered India through a 1971 war with arch-rival Pakistan that led to the creation of Bangladesh, pursued a policy of non-alignment vis-a-vis the United States and the Soviet Union and consolidated friendships in Asia and Africa.

But while her international stature grew, her reputation at home was seriously eroded by several controversial moves, which Keni promises the film will not gloss over.

"Politics will not be the focus of the film but will form the backdrop for bringing out her personality," said Keni.

Gandhi, hugely popular among the masses, was nevertheless trounced in elections after she imposed a state of emergency in the mid-1970s, during which she curbed fundamental rights and jailed opposition leaders.

Her decision to

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Comic book creator sues Marvel Entertainment over 'Spider-Man' production's 'jackpot' profits

By Devlin Barrett

NEW YORK—The creative force behind Spider-Man, the Incredible Hulk and Daredevil filed a $10 million lawsuit Tuesday, charging his old comic book company is cheating him out of millions of dollars in movie profits.

Menagerie

Stan Lee, who crafted a menagerie of superpowered heroes with very human flaws, now claims Marvel Entertainment Inc. has tried to shut him out of the "jackpot" success of this summer's "Spider-Man" movie.

Lee's attorneys filed court papers in Manhattan federal court, claiming that Marvel signed a deal to give their client 10 percent of any profits from his characters used in films and television shows.

"Spider-Man" has been the year's biggest hit, grossing more than $400 million domestically—but the 80-year-old Lee says he hasn't seen a penny.

"Despite reaping enormous benefits from Mr. Lee's creations, defendants have failed and refused to honor their commitments to him," the lawsuit charges.

Contract

Marvel has reported millions of dollars in earnings from the film but has told Lee the company has seen no "profits" as defined by their contract.

Lee hopes a judge will intervene and make sure he gets a percentage of profits from the Ben Affleck movie "Daredevil," scheduled for release in February.

He also seeks a share of profits from the upcoming movie "The Hulk," and the sequels to "X-Men" and "Spider-Man."

The lawsuit demands damages and a court order forcing Marvel to turn over Lee's share in any profits from movies about characters he created.

Statement

Marvel issued a statement saying Lee "continues to be well-compensated" for his contributions to the industry. It said the company is "in full compliance with, and current on all payments due under, terms of Mr. Lee's employment agreement."

"Spider-Man" stars Tobey Maguire as the teenage superhero, Willem Dafoe as the villainous Green Goblin and Kirsten Dunst as love interest Mary Jane Watson. A sequel is due out in 2004. *AP*

"SPIDER-MAN." The film year's biggest hit thus far.

SWITCHING CHANNELS

'We're closing in on ABS-CBN,' GMA executives claim

FERNANDEZ. 20th anniversary show.

By Edmund L. Sicam

GMA, which recently launched its "Kapuso mo, Anumang Kulay ng Buhay," claims it is closing the gap with the market leader, ABS-CBN. The network's president, Felipe L. Gozon, told us recently that his dream of making GMA No. 1 again is fast becoming a reality.

Previous managements of GMA were content to be a strong number 2. When Gozon took over the helm, he changed GMA's objective and aimed for the top spot. After all, the network used to be the market leader during the time of Freddie Garcia, who's now the top executive at ABS-CBN.

Gozon brought along his management team to a press lunch to answer questions related to the corporate thrust of the network. Gilberto Duavit Jr, EVP and COO, stated proudly that GMA is giving ABS-CBN a tough time during daytime programming. In some cases, GMA's shows rate higher. It is in primetime that the network is still lagging behind, but not for long, says Duavit. There are plans to strengthen the shows.

From his end, Manuel Quiogue, president of GMA Marketing and Productions Inc., reported positive results in the commercial load of the network. Because of the higher ratings, advertisers are looking at GMA as a viable alternative.

On the financial side, SVP Felipe Yalong said gross revenues in September reached an all-time high of P473 million or 61percent more than last year's sales of P294 million.

Explaining the new logo, Jessica Abaya, head of the Corporate Strategic Planning Department said, "We defined GMA's relationship with its viewers as *Kapamilya*, not necessarily related by blood."

What's good about the network wars is that the audience will benefit. ABS-CBN will obviously not take this threat lying down. That means both networks will go all-out to capture more viewers with interesting programs.

Pops concert on Dec. 14

"Pops 2002," the 20th anniversary concert of Pops Fernandez, will be staged on Dec. 14 at the Ultra. At the presscon for her concert, we found out that her ex, Martin Nievera, was also holding a show on the same day. So we surveyed members of the press whose show they were going to watch. Out of the 13 writers and editors present, nine said they were going to watch Pops.

I texted Martin to get his reaction, asking him what he had to offer the nine so they would watch him instead, and this was his reply: "I have 20 years to celebrate and X'mas as well. What do I have to offer nine press people? I offer them the concert of Pops. I hear she's great. They can watch me another time."

Christmas at Sta. Lucia

The Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall is holding a "Starlight Starbright Lantern-Making Contest" with P10,000 in cash and gift certificates as the top prize. Only the first 20 entries will be accepted. Deadline is Dec. 15.

Meanwhile, glee clubs, church choirs and other organizations are invited to join the "Himig Pasko" chorale competition. Top prize is P 10,000 in cash and gift certificates. Only the first 10 groups to register may join.

AIDS concert

Hard Rock Cafe kicks off its Christmas celebration with a party for a good cause: the World AIDS Day concert on Dec. 1.

The celebration features Ivy Violan, Janno Gibbs, Dessa, RJ Rosales, Agot Isidro, Geneva Cruz, Janet Basco, Franco Laurel, Jinky Llamanzares, Carol Banawa and Regine Velasquez.

Shemekia Copeland sends loud message from blues world

By James Reindl

CHICAGO—Ask Shemekia Copeland and she will tell you she is shy about her voice, so shy that she dislikes leaving messages on telephone answering machines.

OK, but the 23-year-old singer is sending a loud and clear message from the blues world.

Third CD

Now touring to support her third CD on Alligator Records, "Talking to Strangers," Copeland already has been nominated for a Grammy Award, and won four W.C. Handy Awards, the highest prize in the blues recording industry.

"People think I'm hoarse and my voice is gone all the time when they speak with me just in conversation because I have such a quiet voice," she said in a recent interview in Chicago, where she opened for the Rolling Stones.

COPELAND. Vocal authority and authenticity.

SHEMEKIA/ G3

Bollywood . . .

From page G1

send the army into the Golden Temple, Sikhism's holiest shrine, in 1984 to flush out militants hiding there created deep resentment among Sikhs. The security men who killed her months after the Golden Temple raid were Sikhs.

Her critics also say she unabashedly promoted dynastic rule by foisting her sons, Sanjay and Rajiv, on the Congress party, which she headed.

Strained relations

The movie, which Keni said he would start shooting early next year, will also explore Gandhi's strained relations with her husband.

"The film will deal with all the major issues of her time—everything that shows her loneliness, her dilemmas and the ability to handle crises," Keni said.

Keni, who produced the hit "Gadar—Ek Prem Katha" (Mutiny—A Love Story) two years ago, promises the film will steer clear of the song-and-dance routines that are the trademark of most films made in Bombay, the centre of India's "Bollywood" film industry.

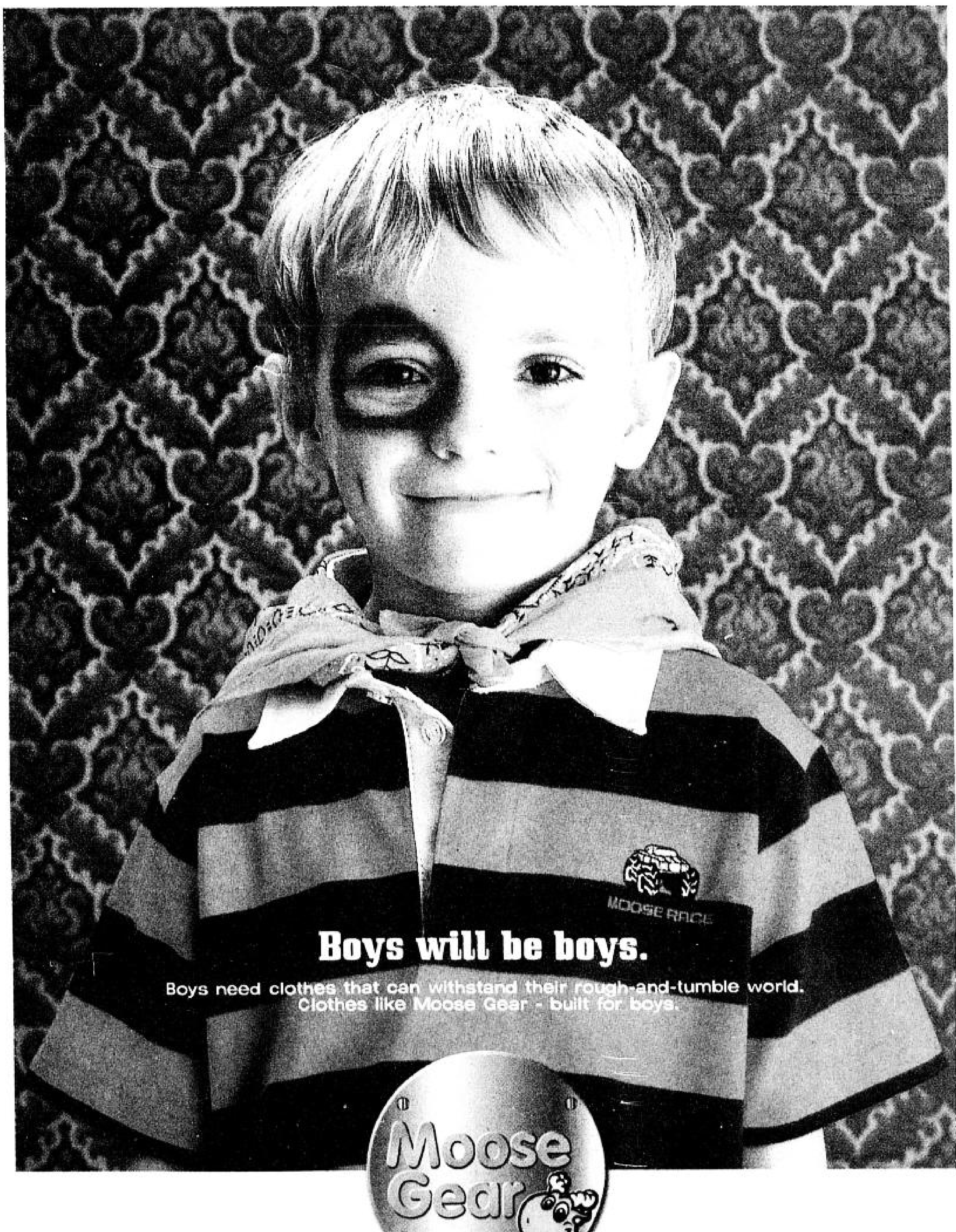
He hopes to get top actors from across the country to play key roles, with the lead part going to Bollywood star Manisha Koirala.

Research for the film, budgeted at about 150 million rupees ($3 million), will be based on more than 500 hours of documentary footage and several biographies.

But critics wonder if Bollywood, known more for its glamour than sophisticated scripts, can do justice to the subject.

"I don't think Bollywood can pull off a 'Gandhi,'" said media critic Anil Dharker, who was a member of India's Film Finance Corporation, which co-produced Attenborough's epic.

"I don't know if anyone here has the meticulousness and devotion to focus on one project like Richard did for 18 years," he said, referring to Attenborough's "Gandhi." He also said a film on a recent political figure such as Indira Gandhi is bound to invite protests in India's "immature democracy." *Reuters*


MOOSE RACE
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'Love in the Time of Money' features competent performers

By Tim Molloy

NEW YORK—It's odd to include "love" in the title of "Love in the Time of Money" because there's not much of it among the sad New Yorkers searching for fulfillment through sex during the late '90s dot-com boom.

Social equalizer

First-time director Peter Mattei restages Arthur Schnitzler's 1896 play "Reigen," keeping Schnitzler's theme of sex as a social equalizer and daisy-chain format.

One character meets another. The first character leaves the story and the second meets a third. The second disappears as the third meets a fourth. The resolution comes from a meeting between the last character and the first.

Things starts slowly—a little too slowly. But the final moments are so intimate and intense that you feel positively voyeuristic watching. Not that "Love" ever resorts to titillation—doing so would detract from its messages about people brought together by desperation more than anything else.

Some of the characters—a contractor we meet earlier on, a bored woman who seduces him, her husband—aren't particularly interesting. We don't mind the small amount of time we spend on their stories.

Searing impressions

But a few actors make searing impressions with just minutes of screen time, including Adrian Grenier as a jilted twentysomething, Carol Kane as an older woman who gives him a sweet speech on time and pain, and Michael Imperioli of "The Sopranos" as a self-hating bond salesman.

ROSARIO Dawson plays Anna in Mattei's film. AP

At times the film thinks it's more daring than it is. The bored wife (Jill Hennessy) forces her dinner guests into what is supposed to be a dangerous conversation comparing how often men and women think about sex. It's hard to find this risque when Jay Leno has mulled the same issue in a Doritos commercial.

And there are too many moments when the film seems bleak: Most of the liaisons turn out to be empty and utterly depressing. When two characters end up in a genuine relationship, we only hear about it in a resentful rundown from a rejected party.

But by the end, "Love" strikes a balance between characters done in by loneliness and those who save themselves. And even some of the weaker story lines have clever moments.

Volume war

In the husband-and-wife story, she tries to win his attention and he tries to drown her out in a volume war of televisions, music and a blender. It's a funny and sad way to explain their marriage.

And the best scenes cling in your memory long after the picture ends, including a hellish exchange between Imperioli's bond salesman and a prostitute. You don't want to watch but you have to.

The film is shot on digital video, which adds to the sense of fluidity and the drive of boomtown Manhattan. Mattei's attempts to ratchet up the energy with constant traffic noises is annoying, but the drowsily pretty soundtrack nicely captures the mood of longing.

The dialogue ranges from pat to sharp, as when the salesman asks a telephone psychic what she's wearing.

"I offer psychic advice," she says, "not phone sex."

"OK," he says. "Tell me what I'm wearing."

"Love in the Time of Money," released by ThinkFilm, runs 90 minutes. Two and a half stars (out of four). *AP*

Sex Bomb Girls 'invade' the movies

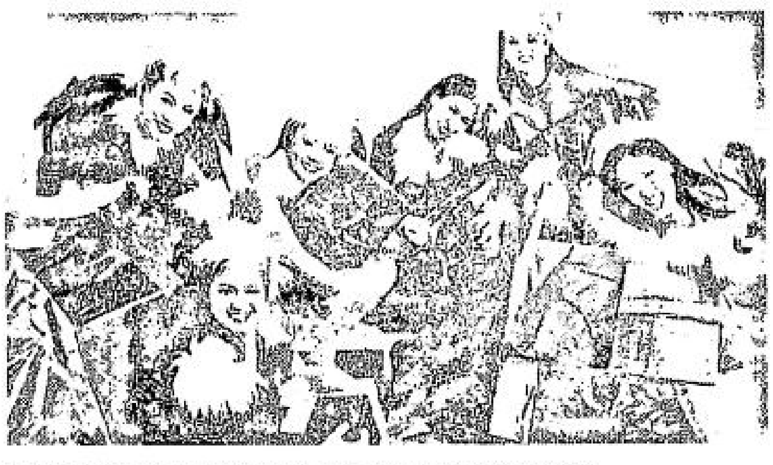
By Edmund L. Sicam

IT'S been done before—sexy dancers gyrating to the latest hits on TV shows—but no one has done it as successfully as the Sex Bomb Girls. The group started out as part of the scenery on the "Laban O Bawi" portion of "Eat Bulaga." Now, they've stolen the scene from hosts Joey de Leon, Vic Sotto, Allan K and Anjo Yllana. The noontime show has also added an audience participation dance contest with the girls, and their sexy figures adorn other segments of the program.

Platinum album

On top of their noontime appearances on TV, they do live performances in Metro Manila and all over the country, where the reception has been very enthusiastic. They have a show almost every day of the week. BMG had the bright idea of doing an album "Unang Putok" with them and that album topped the charts for several weeks and turned multi-platinum in no time. Already out in the market is their Christmas album and it has turned gold after a few weeks.

Mother Lily recognized the mass appeal of the girls and has cast six of them—Rochelle, Jopay, Izzy, Weng, Yvette and Monic—in a movie titled "Bakit Papa" with Wendell Ramos, Allan K, Chynna Ortaleza and Richard Gutierrez. This early, observers are anticipating a box-office hit.



DANCERS go from the boob tube to the movie screen.

The Regal matriarch wants her movie to appeal to a wider group so she is hoping for a PG-13 rating, and even a GP classification. In fact during the presscon for the movie, Mother Lily wanted the entertainment writers to ask wholesome questions because she was not promoting a bold movie.

So what accounts for the success of this group?

Household figures

The girls agree that it was "Eat Bulaga" that thrust them into national prominence. Daily exposure on the show helped them become familiar household figures. The controversy surrounding them created even more awareness.

Some politicians have criticized the group's sexy numbers as bad for the moral fiber of the youth. The girls insist, however, that they're not *"malaswa"* and that they're wholesome in person.

I proved this for myself during the presscon. Without their Sex Bomb outfits, they looked like school girls who blushed whenever a tabloid reporter would ask a sex-oriented question. They're ordinary girls with an extraordinary job and no, they will not disrobe for any movie.

In fact, when the group posed for FHM, which is known for its provocative pictorials, they looked out of place beside all the other nude models featured in the publication.

Some point to their sexy outfits and suggestive dance movements as other reasons for their popularity but if this observation is correct, then only men would be avid followers. But a portion of their audience is composed of women and children.

Other dance groups are known by their group name, while Sex Bomb fans know the names of individual members. At the "Eat Bulaga" studio at Broadway Centrum, members of the audience carry placards paying tribute to their individual favorites. The girls are recognized when they go to malls and people refer to them by their names.

Some point to their combination of wholesomeness and sexiness, something that's difficult to achieve, but the Sex Bomb Girls have done just that.

Talented members

What many people fail to realize is that the group has many talented members, and that's what's sustaining their popularity. I attended the launch of their Christmas album at Hard Rock Cafe and watched the girls perform live for the first time. I was impressed at how they managed to entertain the crowd with their lively repartee, as well as their singing and dancing. Rochelle, in particular, knew which buttons to push to get the audience's attention.

They can also sing moderately well and that's an asset to a group that capitalizes more on its sexy dances. Every Saturday, "Eat Bulaga" challenges them to sing Broadway tunes, hits from the '80s as well as other songs, and they've done very well.

Will they become box office stars as well? Their fans are unanimous in saying, "Yes, Yes, Awwww!"

Kelley's 'Girls Club' show debuts to dismal ratings

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—The biggest problem with "Girls Club," the latest TV show from vaunted producer David E. Kelley, is that few young women tuned in to watch it.

Target audience

Those viewers had been the target audience for the new Fox network drama that premiered Monday night and was intended to replace Fox's former hit show, "Ally McBeal," which was also created by Kelley.

But "Girls Club," about three young female attorneys in a San Francisco law firm, has been dogged by mostly negative reviews and was a ratings dud in its debut outing, according to preliminary figures from Nielsen Media Research.

The show's first episode ranked a distant fourth place among the four major networks in the Monday 9 o'clock hour, averaging a lackluster six million viewers. That's nearly five million fewer than last year's season premiere of another Kelley show about single young lawyers in a big city, "Ally McBeal," in the same time slot.

The new show did especially poorly among viewers aged 18 to 49, the young-adult demographic most coveted by advertisers, registering a lowly 2.6 rating.

By comparison, "Ally McBeal" drew twice that number in its season debut last year. Worst of all, perhaps, were the Nielsen ratings for viewers targeted as the show's principal audience—a dismal 2.9 rating for women aged 18 to 49 and a 3.6 rating for women aged 18 to 34.

No comment

There was no immediate comment from Kelley's production company or from Fox officials, though network executives were believed to be huddling to decide the show's future.

A hasty demise of "Girls Club" would leave Fox, a unit of News Corp. Ltd., with a gaping hole in its schedule on a night that has long been a bright spot for the network, with marquee shows such as "Melrose Place" and "Ally McBeal."

"Girls Club," featuring movie actress Gretchen Mol, was supposed to be the heir apparent to "Ally," the Emmy-winning sensation starring Calista Flockhart that captured a devoted female audience but ended its five-year run last May after sinking steadily in the ratings.

The inauspicious launch of "Girls Club" marks another disappointment for Kelley, who sprang to prominence as the executive producer behind such landmark shows as "L.A. Law" and "Picket Fences." *Reuters*

Shemekia . . .

From page G2

Obviously, those people haven't heard her on stage. When it's house lights down, spotlights up and Copeland behind the microphone, there's a voice with such authority and authenticity that it belies the age of its owner. She can roar with power, drop it into soul overdrive or put it all the way into low-gear smoky ballad.

Adult soul

That is what attracted Alligator owner Bruce Iglauer when he saw her at 17 in a New York club on the recommendation of a friend.

"I never signed kids to records, but I felt that there was an adult soul in a young body," Iglauer said. "Had she been 40 and singing that way, I would have signed her anyway."

Iglauer was so impressed with her demo that he included two songs from the session on her first disc, 1998's "Turn the Heat Up."

"It wasn't 'boy is she good at 17,' it was just 'boy, is she good,'" he said.

Growing up, Copeland was encouraged to sing at home by her father, Texas blues guitar legend Johnny Clyde Copeland. The elder Copeland, who survived eight heart surgeries, but not the ninth, took her to blues shows. As she got older, he brought her on stage. She acknowledges his role in nurturing her as a performer.

She adores him for his role as a father.

"My father was a very big, important part of my life," she said. "I lived in the house with him my whole life growing up. When he was home, home was with me."

Home also was in Harlem, whose violent streets claimed some of her friends, while others became mothers too soon.

"Everything was going on right outside, but I had my own special world inside my home that was filled with music and good family and people. I wasn't allowed to hang outside, although I really wanted to," she said.

Copeland's parents were together until her father's death in 1997, and she now lives with her mother, Sandraa Lynn Copeland, in Lake Harmony, Pennsylvania. Her mother was more inclined to let young Shemekia and brother Tory slide. Not so her father, whom she credits with teaching her honesty, responsibility and a strong work ethic. *AP*

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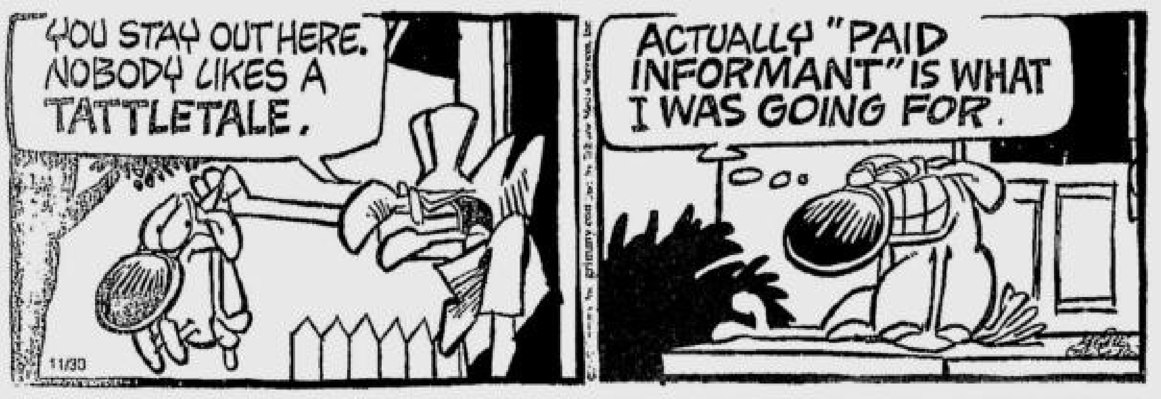
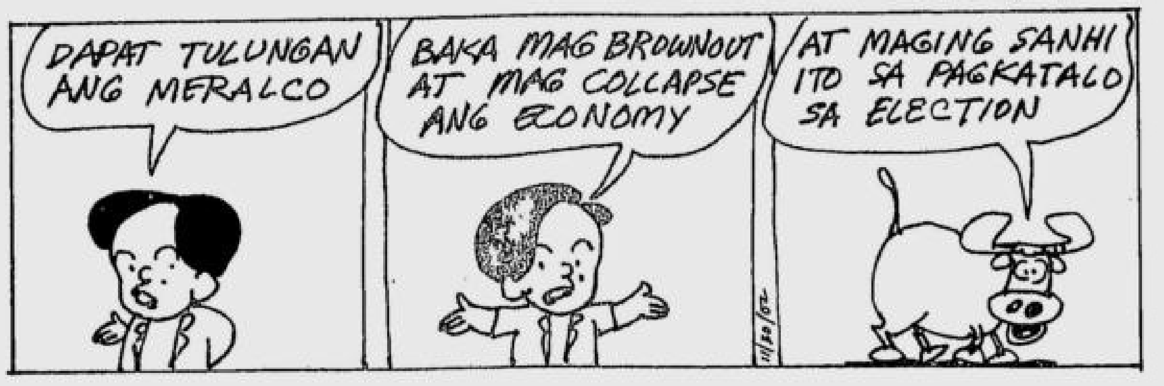
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


YOU STAY OUT HERE. NOBODY LIKES A TATTLETALE.
11/30
ACTUALLY "PAID INFORMANT" IS WHAT I WAS GOING FOR.

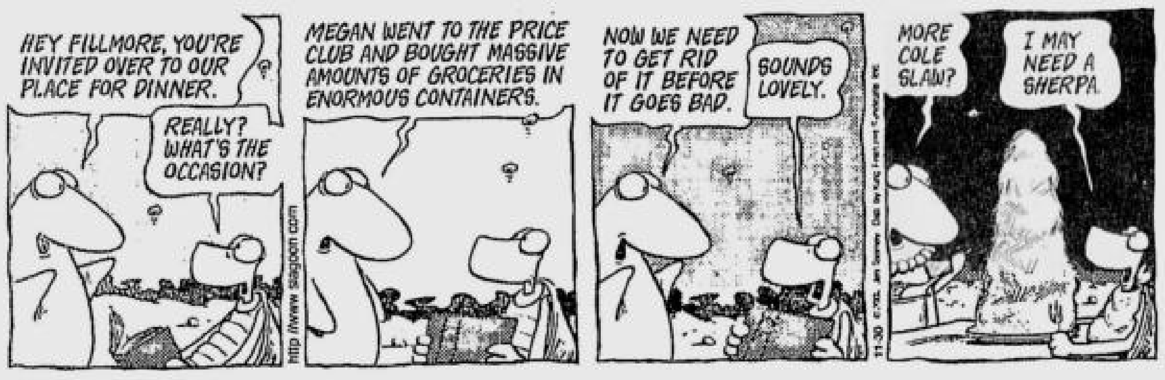
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DAPAT TULUNGAN ANG MERALCO
BAKA MAG BROWNOUT AT MAG COLLAPSE ANG ECONOMY
AT MAGING SANHI ITO SA PAGKATALO SA ELECTION

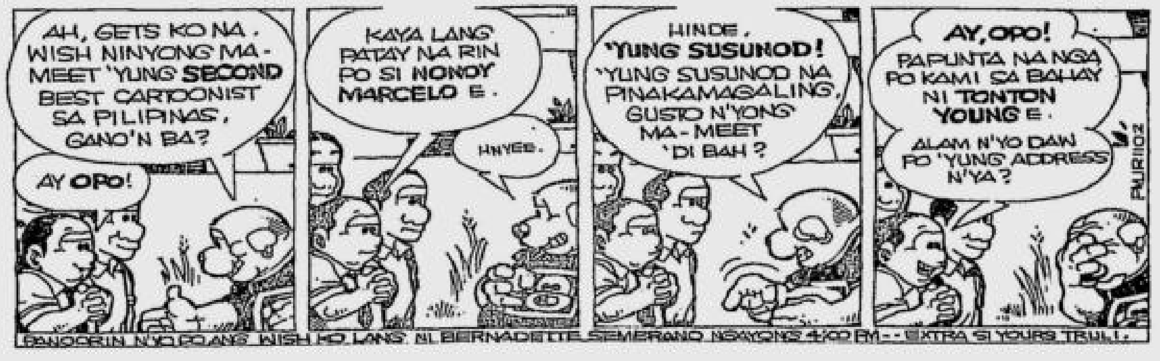
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HEY FILLMORE, YOU'RE INVITED OVER TO OUR PLACE FOR DINNER.
REALLY? WHAT'S THE OCCASION?
MEGAN WENT TO THE PRICE CLUB AND BOUGHT MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF GROCERIES IN ENORMOUS CONTAINERS.
NOW WE NEED TO GET RID OF IT BEFORE IT GOES BAD.
SOUNDS LOVELY.
MORE COLE SLAW?
I MAY NEED A SHERPA.
http://www.slagoon.com

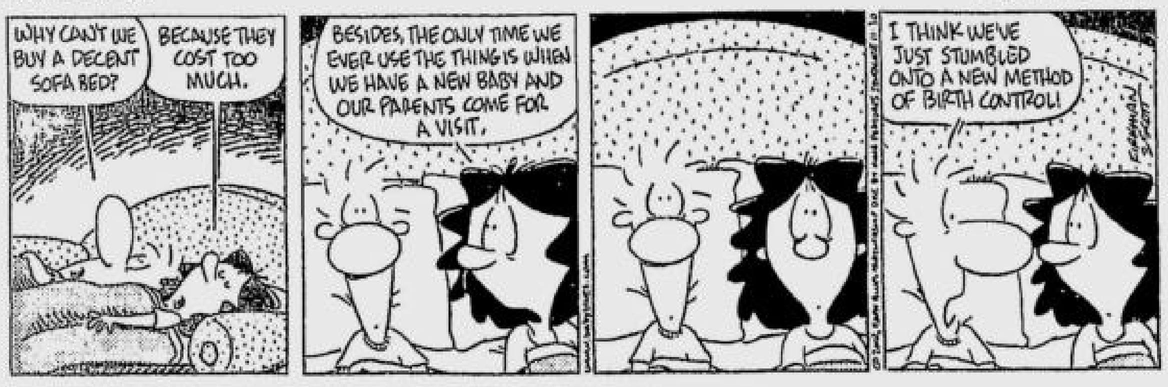
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AH, GETS KO NA. WISH NINYONG MA-MEET 'YUNG SECOND BEST CARTOONIST SA PILIPINAS, GANO'N BA?
AY OPO!
KAYA LANG PATAY NA RIN PO SI NONOY MARCELO E.
HNYEE.
HINDE, 'YUNG SUSUNOD! 'YUNG SUSUNOD NA PINAKAMAGALING, GUSTO N'YONG MA-MEET 'DI BAH?
AY, OPO! PAPUNTA NA NGA PO KAMI SA BAHAY NI TONTON YOUNG E.
ALAM N'YO DAW PO 'YUNG ADDRESS N'YA?
PANOORIN N'YO PO ANG 'WISH KO LANG' NI BERNADETTE SEMBRANO NGAYONG 4:00 PM -- EXTRA SI YOURS TRULI.

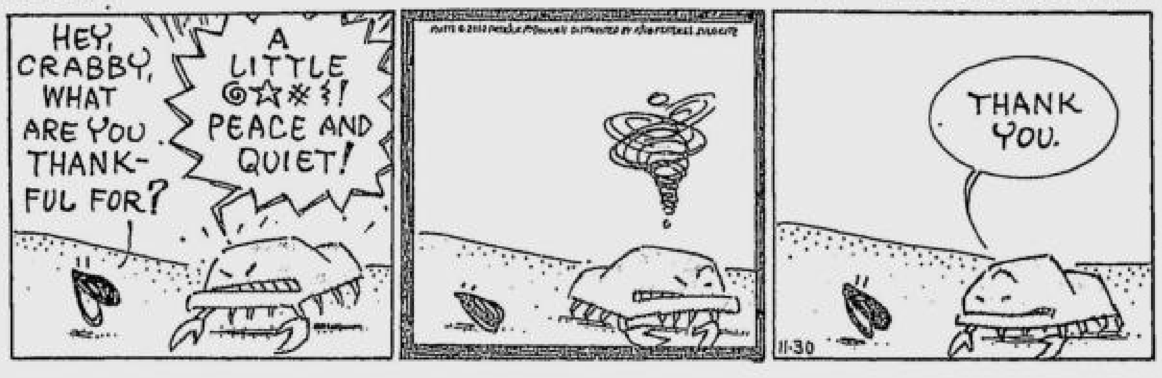
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHY CAN'T WE BUY A DECENT SOFA BED?
BECAUSE THEY COST TOO MUCH.
BESIDES, THE ONLY TIME WE EVER USE THE THING IS WHEN WE HAVE A NEW BABY AND OUR PARENTS COME FOR A VISIT.
I THINK WE'VE JUST STUMBLED ONTO A NEW METHOD OF BIRTH CONTROL!

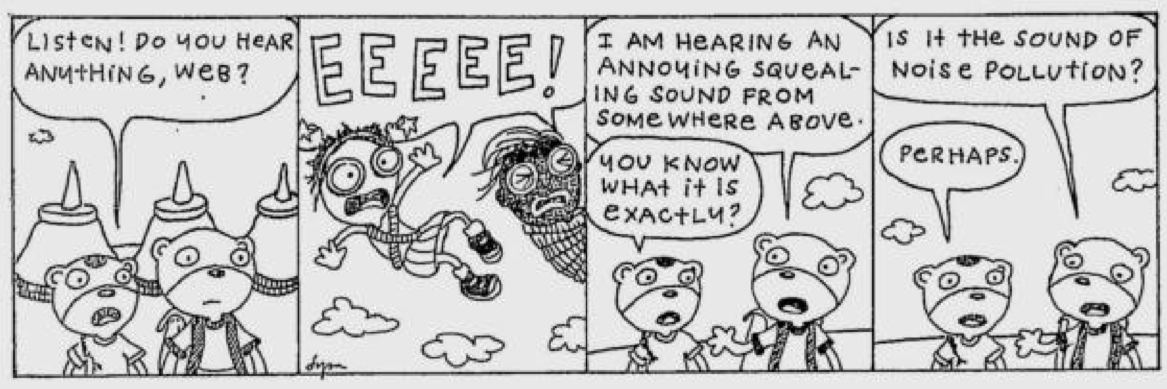
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, CRABBY, WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?
A LITTLE @☆*$! PEACE AND QUIET!
11-30
THANK YOU.

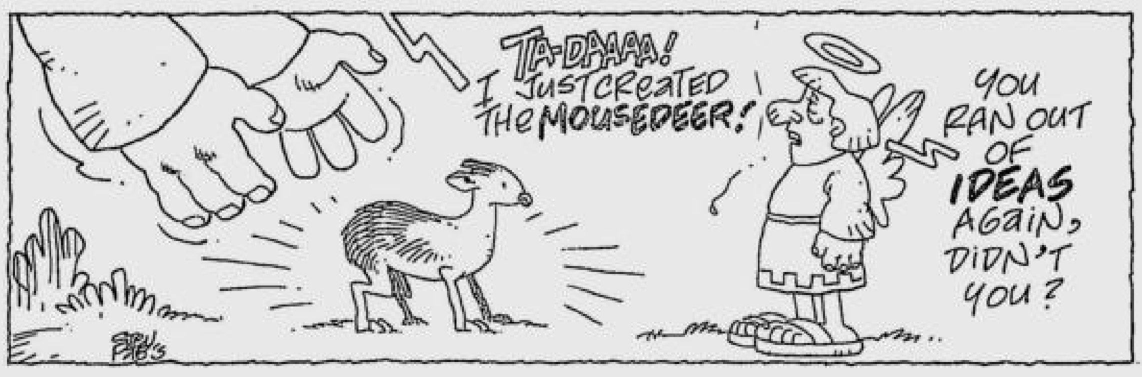
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


LISTEN! DO YOU HEAR ANYTHING, WEB?
EEEEE!
I AM HEARING AN ANNOYING SQUEALING SOUND FROM SOMEWHERE ABOVE.
YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS EXACTLY?
IS IT THE SOUND OF NOISE POLLUTION?
PERHAPS.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TA-DAAAA! I JUST CREATED THE MOUSEDEER!
YOU RAN OUT OF IDEAS AGAIN, DIDN'T YOU?

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Billy Idol, Mandy Patinkin, Dick Clark, Ben Stiller

Happy Birthday: Your vision is strong and you will have the ability to convince others to help you along the way. Balance will be the key to your success. You will have the good sense to let others do the trivial jobs so that you can focus on what you do best. Your ability to pull everything together is your true talent. Your numbers are 1, 4, 22, 28, 36, 40

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Emotions may flare up if you have forgotten an important date. Don't be stubborn; make amends. Travel may fall short of your expectations. Tie up loose ends by working diligently.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Family get-togethers will offer good conversation and a chance to receive information that may, in fact, lead to lucrative investments. Be sure to spend with family.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Creative pursuits or activities involving youngsters will be successful. Travel should be on your agenda. Get together with those who offer mental stimulation.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Your temper may be pushed to the limit if you allow those you live with to take you for granted. Disillusionment regarding your partnership will lead to disappointment. Begin reevaluating all your relationships.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Gambling and extravagance will be your downfall. You can earn money; however, your tendency to let it slip through your fingers must be addressed. Now is the time to take control and be responsible.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will have the discipline to finish what you start. Make sure you give yourself enough time to do it well. You may find it difficult to honor your word if you make promises that are totally unreasonable.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Disharmony in your personal life may cause illness. Try to get to the root of the problem through discussions. You have overloaded your plate. Pamper yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Ask for help. You do not have to go it alone. Budget carefully if you want to reach the goals you've set. Problems with elders may develop, causing some disruptions to your plans.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't get into disputes at organizational meetings. You need to find out all the facts. The best approach is to get as much information as possible.

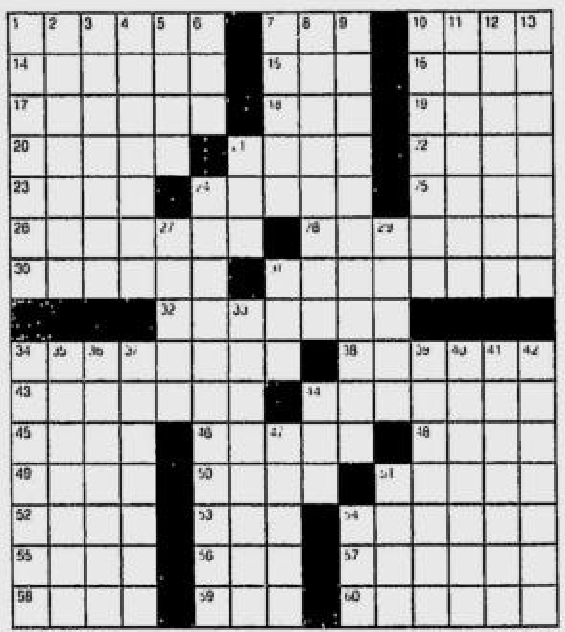
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will attract those who may not be the best influence. Try to be more discriminating. Don't be too eager to lend your belongings to others. Make sure that you aren't being self-deceptive about your importance.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Lowered vitality will make it difficult for you to get things done. Don't make promises. Whatever energy you have should be spent on building your self-esteem. You can meet new friends or lovers through family get-togethers.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Luck is with you. Go out and have some fun with your friends. Take a look at your professional direction and think about the changes you would like to make in the upcoming year.

Birthday Baby: You will be playful, energetic and persuasive. You will be a lover, a crusader and a mediator. You will have what it takes to capture the interest of others.

DAILY CROSSWORD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By Ed Voile
Gillette, WY

11/30/02

ACROSS
1 Trousers
7 Grassy ground
10 Beat it!
14 Mark of distinction
15 Exist
16 State on Lake Erie
17 Blood conduit
18 Rim
19 Actress Garr
20 Less common
21 At any time
22 Corridor
23 Dock of the bay
24 All by oneself
25 Fencing sword
26 Ships' flags
28 Supporter of Nicholas II
30 Dealt in used goods
31 Low quality of music?
32 Le Guin and Andress
34 Features of some hairdos
38 Sewing tool
43 Strong, dark tobacco
44 Element 39
45 Exult blatantly
46 Neon and xenon
48 Crash-site grp.
49 Makes mistakes
50 Pops the question
51 Siamese fighting fish
52 With fewer calories
53 Haggard heroine
54 Nosegays
55 Lascivious look
56 Put in stitches
57 Modifies
58 Ends' partner?
59 April 15 org.
60 Posh

DOWN
1 Run away in London
2 Newman of "SNL"
3 Female thespian
4 Southampton so long
5 John or Deborah
6 Barnyard enclosure
7 Volley
8 Eastern
9 Sedatives
10 Ann of "My Mother the Car"
11 Low-price version
12 Like a vacuum
13 Bathroom fixtures
21 Golfer Ernie
24 Olympic tennis gold-medallist
27 Paste-up artist
29 Balance-sheet item
31 Clear tables
33 Scatterer of fluids
34 Florentine painter Paolo
35 Warded off a thrust
36 Wore
37 Blue noses Down Under
39 One Snoop Sister
40 Simple tunes
41 Sheens
42 Ambassador and his staff
44 Positive reply
47 Takes an oblique course
51 1972 Nobel winner
54 __ Ten Conference

Friday's Puzzle Solved

R	I	L	L	■	S	A	B	R	A	■	M	A	I	M
I	D	E	A	■	U	S	U	A	L	■	A	L	G	A
F	L	A	S	H	B	A	C	K	G	O	R	D	O	N
T	E	P	E	E	■	■	K	E	E	P	■	E	R	E
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M	U	D	■	T	A	R	O	■	■	S	A	W	E	D
A	V	E	■	E	R	R	O	R	■	■	R	O	L	E
S	U	P	E	R	N	A	T	U	R	A	L	M	A	N
O	L	A	V	■	■	S	H	L	E	P	■	A	T	E
N	A	R	E	S	■	■	R	E	N	O	■	N	E	B
■	■	T	R	I	G	■	O	D	D	L	Y	■	■	■
A	I	M	■	G	R	E	G	■	■	L	A	U	R	A
G	R	E	E	N	E	Y	E	D	H	O	R	N	E	T
H	O	N	K	■	T	A	R	E	S	■	D	I	D	O
A	N	T	E	■	A	S	S	E	T	■	S	T	O	P

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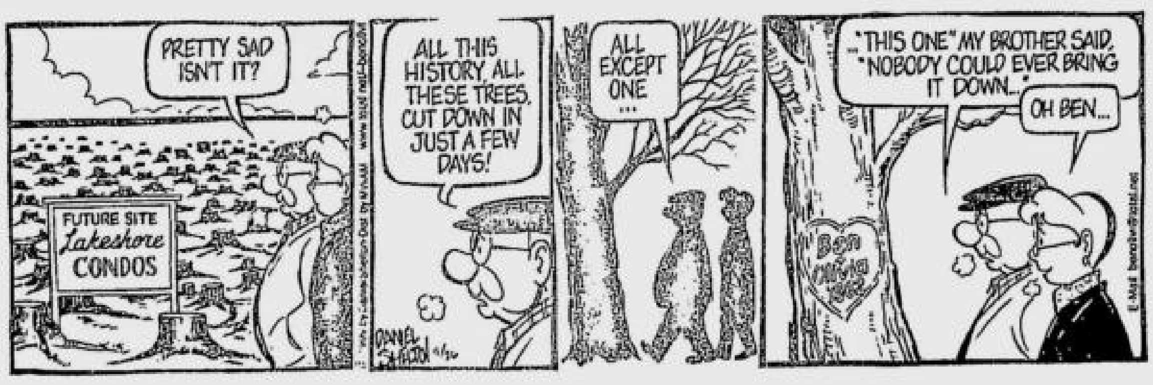
11/30/02

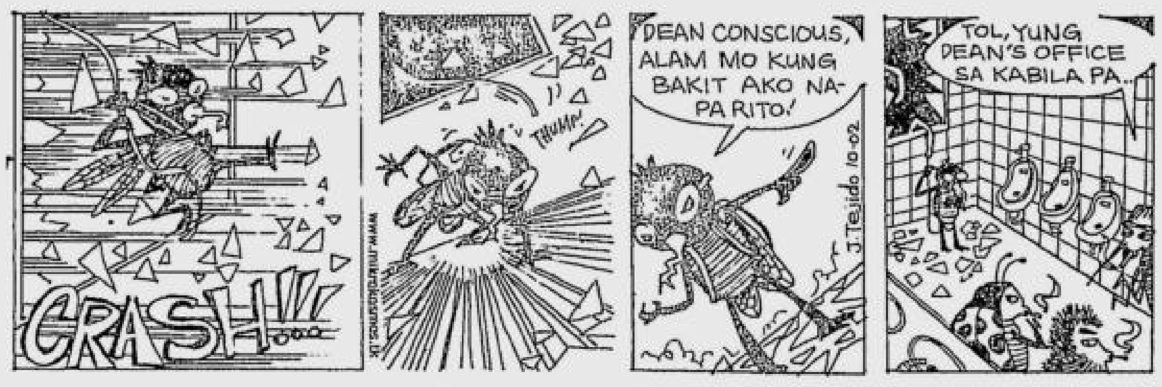
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


PRETTY SAD ISN'T IT?
FUTURE SITE Lakeshore CONDOS
ALL THIS HISTORY, ALL THESE TREES, CUT DOWN IN JUST A FEW DAYS!
ALL EXCEPT ONE ...
"THIS ONE" MY BROTHER SAID. "NOBODY COULD EVER BRING IT DOWN..."
OH BEN...

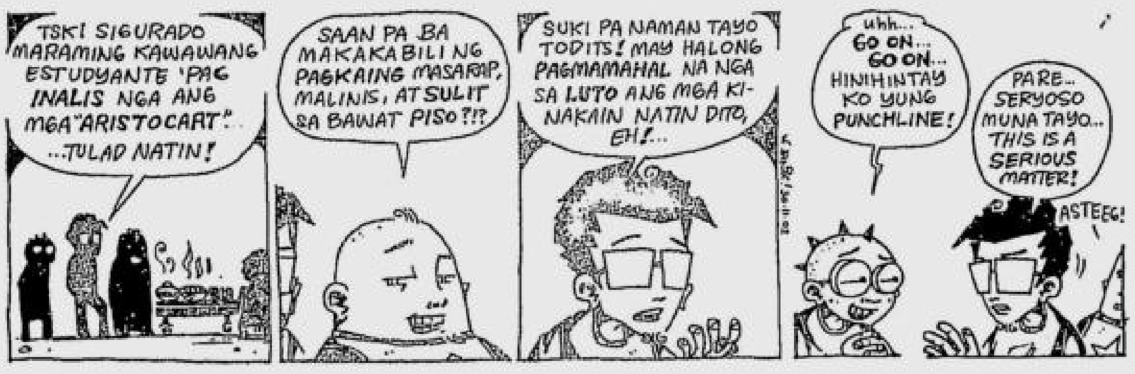
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


CRASH!!!
THUMP!
DEAN CONSCIOUS, ALAM MO KUNG BAKIT AKO NAPA RITO!
J. Tejido 10-02
TOL, YUNG DEAN'S OFFICE SA KABILA PA..

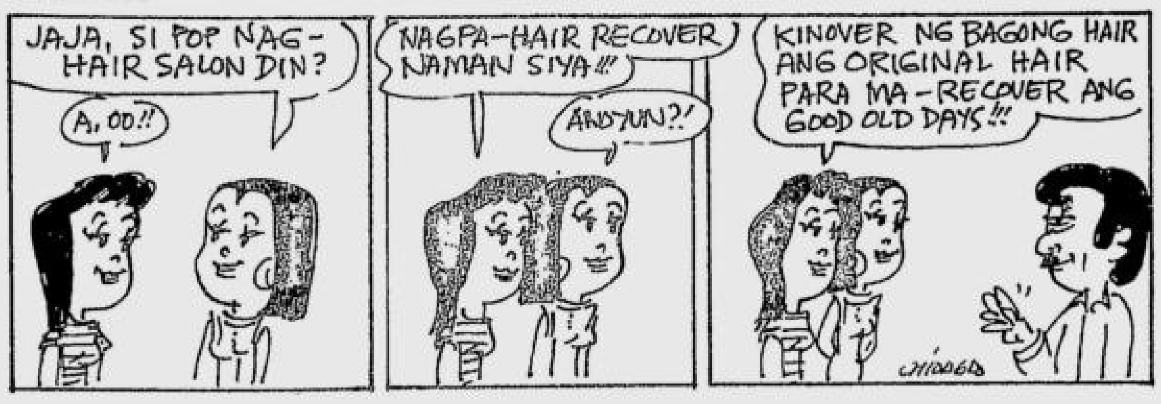
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! SIGURADO MARAMING KAWAWANG ESTUDYANTE 'PAG INALIS NGA ANG MGA "ARISTOCART"... ...TULAD NATIN!
SAAN PA BA MAKAKABILI NG PAGKAING MASARAP, MALINIS, AT SULIT SA BAWAT PISO?!?
SUKI PA NAMAN TAYO TODITS! MAY HALONG PAGMAMAHAL NA NGA SA LUTO ANG MGA KINAKAIN NATIN DITO, EH!...
uhh... GO ON... GO ON... HINIHINTAY KO YUNG PUNCHLINE!
PARE.. SERYOSO MUNA TAYO... THIS IS A SERIOUS MATTER!
ASTEEG!

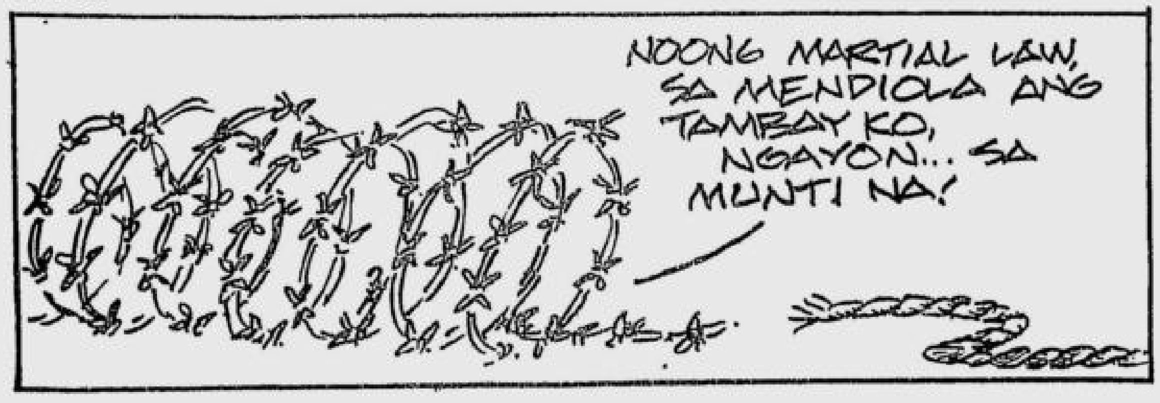
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, SI POP NAG-HAIR SALON DIN?
A, OO!!
NAGPA-HAIR RECOVER NAMAN SIYA!!!
ANDYUN?!
KINOVER NG BAGONG HAIR ANG ORIGINAL HAIR PARA MA-RECOVER ANG GOOD OLD DAYS!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING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SATURDAY*Special*

LEONOR Watling (left), as Alicia and Rosario Flores as Lydia in "Talk to Her." AP

Almodovar switches focus to men in his latest film

By Matt Wolf

LOS ANGELES—Pedro Almodovar's "Talk To Her" begins with a curtain going up, but there couldn't be a less stagey movie than the Academy Award winner's latest film.

Nurse

As has often been the case with the Spanish director, his focus is people on the margins of society—in this case, a nurse named Benigno (relative newcomer Javier Camara), whose care for a comatose ballet dancer, Alicia (Leonor Watling), borders on necrophilia.

But the truth is that everyone deserves—and receives—dignity and respect in Almodovar's grief-stricken landscape, which is just one of the reasons why a Spanish-language film with no real stars nonetheless looks set to speak to a great many people.

Those who have tracked Almodovar's emphasis on women over the years will be fascinated to find him switching his focus to men.

Although the presence of the immobile Alicia (she was in a car accident four years earlier) hovers throughout, the movie's centerpiece is the lonely, yearning Benigno, whom Camara turns into one of the defining characters of the Almodovar canon.

Bedside vigils

Benigno, we learn, has known no shortage of bedside vigils in his 24 years, starting with his mother, a woman who'd stay in bed even when she wasn't ill. Alicia's tragic accident galvanizes the young man further since he was aware of her well before—from her days as a burgeoning dancer at an academy run by Katerina (Geraldine Chaplin, making a welcome return to the screen).

One evening, Benigno is attending a dance recital and finds himself seated next to a considerably older Argentine travel journalist, Marco (Dario Grandinetti), with whom Benigno strikes up a rapport.

Imagine the two men's surprise, then, when Marco visits the hospital to tend to his beloved Lydia (Rosario Flores), a matador who has been gored by a bull and had her cerebral cortex destroyed, only to find Benigno on the staff.

From that point begins an unlikely friendship between the worldly, macho Marco and Benigno, the insular if kindly fantasist. The implication is that Benigno's experience of sex exists solely in his head, though a plot twist toward the end raises the possibility that he has perpetrated the sort of sexual act that few films dare go near.

Less comic

The action at times leaps forward in fits and starts while nonetheless always filling in its characters' largely mournful pasts. (This film is noticeably less comic than Almodovar's "Women On the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (1988) and his 2000 Oscar winner, "All About My Mother.")

And sure to generate discussion is a seven-minute silent film within the film, "Shrinking Lover," which shows a scientist who shrinks until he has been swallowed up by his lover's vagina.

"Talk To Her," a Sony Classics release, runs 105 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four. *AP*

'Mousetrap' marks 50 years as longest-running play

By Paul Majendie

LONDON—Queen Elizabeth and "The Mousetrap" get together on Monday night for a double celebration—both have enjoyed half a century at the top in Britain.

British monarch

In her Golden Jubilee year, the British monarch is off to to the theater to see the Agatha Christie whodunnit on the night that performance number 20,807 marks its 50th anniversary as the world's longest-running play.

"The Mousetrap" ranks alongside Westminster Abbey and Buckingham Palace as one of Britain's must-see tourist attractions and it shows no signs of running out of steam. "I don't see why it should ever come off," said its producer, Sir Stephen Waley-Cohen.

Oscar-winning director Richard Attenborough, who was in the original production, agrees: "It is like a London institution—like the ravens in The Tower of London." Attenborough, who will be making the curtain call speech after Monday night's gala performance, said: "You must view the play as a classical piece of theater. That is why it has run so long." And for the queen, it offers a chance to celebrate another great British icon after her attendance last week at the world premiere of the latest James Bond movie marked the 40th anniversary of the world's most famous secret agent.

Murder drama

Buckingham Palace said it believed the monarch was seeing the murder drama for the first time. "She doesn't know whodunnit," a spokeswoman said. "So yes, she's looking forward to seeing it." "The Mousetrap" was originally called "Three Blind Mice" and was written by Agatha Christie in 1947 as a 30-minute radio play to celebrate the then Queen Mary's 80th birthday.

It took to the London stage the year that Queen Elizabeth took to the throne. Both have survived a roller-coaster half century since then. Fashions have changed but they have both survived. The play has been seen by over 10 million people and performed in 44 different countries.

"The Mousetrap" has three different entries in the Guinness Book of World Records:

It is the longest-running theatrical show in the world.

It boasts the world's most durable actor—David Raven played the role of Major Metcalfe for 4,575 performances.

Nancy Seabrooke can lay claim to being the world's longest-serving understudy for 6,240 performances over 15 years. She would sit patiently out in the wings doing embroidery and crochet. *Reuters*

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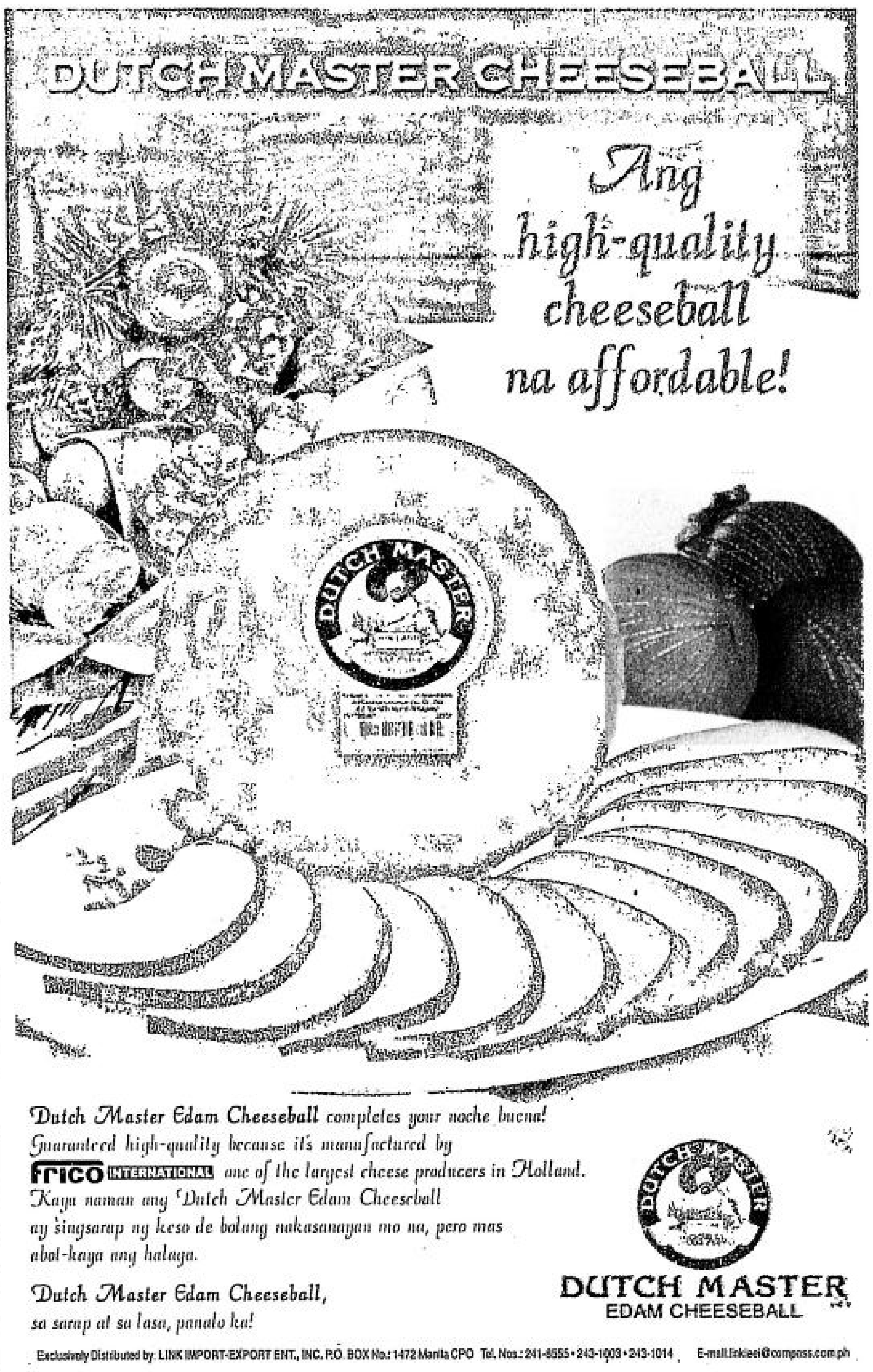

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New Pearl Jam CD finds plenty of material in mortality

By Gene Johnson

SEATTLE—Eddie Vedder has found plenty of material in mortality over the years.

Suicide

His band, Pearl Jam, was born of a heroin overdose more than a decade ago. Rival songwriter Kurt Cobain of Nirvana committed suicide while at the height of popularity. Two of Pearl Jam's biggest hits, "Jeremy" and "Last Kiss," deal with teen death.

Now comes renewal, an appropriate topic as the lead singer and his bandmates re-emerge from their most proximate shock: the deaths of nine fans trampled during the 2000 Roskilde festival in Denmark.

"Riot Act," released Nov. 12, is Pearl Jam's first studio album since the festival, and it suggests how the band has tried to come to grips with it. It's also something of a rebirth: Pearl Jam's record sales had dropped since the early 1990s as the band retreated from superstardom to release more experimental music. "Riot Act," with its sweet melodies, is bound to appeal to a broader audience.

New drummer

Once again, Pearl Jam, with new drummer Matt Cameron (formerly of Soundgarden), is promoting itself. Band members have been doing rounds of media interviews and even shot an MTV-style video, something it hadn't done since its original video for "Jeremy" was censored by producers in 1992.

They know that a commercially successful record this time around could help them get a better deal: "Riot Act" is its last album under contract with Epic. It could also earn the band more freedom, just as the success of Pearl Jam's first album, 1991's "Ten," allowed members to do their own thing for the rest of the decade.

Pearl Jam's latest CD is a part of what amounts to a grunge revival. A Nirvana compilation is out this fall, along with Cobain's diaries, and Mudhoney and Audioslave (featuring former Soundgarden frontman Chris Cornell) also have new releases.

"There really was something happening at that time in Seattle," says Pearl Jam bassist Jeff Ament, referring to the music scene a decade ago, "and it's cool to see it come back around. It's good to remind people of it, and for the younger audience, you know, it introduces them to Nirvana and hopefully will introduce them to us and to what Chris is doing and what Mudhoney's doing."

But for Pearl Jam, "Riot Act" seems primarily a way of dealing with Roskilde, and even 9-11—not reliving those early days at the Off Ramp and other gritty nightclubs.

THE CHEAP ONES

PEARL JAM. In search of musical and psychological renewal.

Filter

"There's been a lot of mortality," Vedder says. "It's a weird time to be writing. Roskilde changed the shape of us as people, and our filter for seeing the world changed."

On June 30, 2000, Pearl Jam played before 50,000 fans in a muddy field at Roskilde, one of Europe's largest rock festivals. Fans toward the rear pushed forward to better hear the band; several fans toward the front were trampled. Besides the nine killed, 25 were injured.

"A friend of ours (Cornell) had just had a baby, and we heard about that about an hour before we went on to play that night," Vedder says. "To have the life cycle so intensely illustrated in front of our face, at the time I felt like the world was collapsing."

The title "Riot Act" suggests orchestrated chaos, an attempt to find order. But the album, Pearl Jam's seventh in studio, gives its most overt nod to those emotions in "Love Boat Captain," an elegy which has Vedder singing: "It's an art to live with pain/ mix the light into gray/ lost nine friends we'll never know/ two years ago today."

The first single from the record, "I Am Mine," handles the subject a little differently. Though it refers to "the meanings that get left behind/ all the innocents lost at one time," it's an affirmation, too: "I know I was born and I know that I'll die/ the in-between is mine/ I am mine."

Positive part

"The through line is how delicate life is," Ament says. "Roskilde, for me, is one of the worst tragedies I've been involved in. It can't help but have a huge effect on your life. The positive part of it is it reinforces that philosophy . . . that you really need to seize the moment and the day and make the most of it, and not be afraid to tell your friends and family that you love them."

Pearl Jam, created by surviving Mother Love Bone members Ament and Stone Gossard following the heroin death of singer Andy Wood, never exactly disappeared. But since its debut album, "Ten," which sold more than 11 million copies, sales have fallen, with the group's last album, 2000's "Binaural," selling fewer than 800,000.

In the meantime, the band had been wrangling with Ticketmaster, which it accused of anticompetitive practices, and in general going against industry grain: "Last Kiss," a cover which became the band's biggest single, was initially a fan-club-only release—a nontraditional path to heavy airplay.

Vedder also devoted attention to politics, campaigning for Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader. The spoken-word "Bush Leaguer," on the new album, is a not-so-subtle assault on President Bush: "He's not a leader/ he's a Texas leaguer . . . Drilling for fear/ makes the job simple/ born on third, thinks he got a triple." *AP*

Danny Glover filming TV program on HIV/AIDS and children in Trinidad

By Michael Smith

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad—Actor Danny Glover began a three-day visit to Trinidad on Wednesday to film a television program on HIV/AIDS and children, a UN spokeswoman said.

The 55-year-old American, who starred in the "Lethal Weapon" movies and the film "The Color Purple," arrived early Wednesday at the Caribbean country's Piarco International Airport, UN spokeswoman Vashty Maharaj said.

10 episodes

Glover will host the first of 10 episodes of a series called Hot Spots, scheduled to begin airing in January on the American cable network Showtime, Maharaj said.

The program is part of a series about the various struggles children face around the world. Actress Angelina Jolie will visit a refugee camp in Zambia and actor Jeff Bridges will host an episode looking at hunger in the United States.

The Trinidad episode will focus on children and HIV/AIDS, with Glover talking about the virus with Trinidadian youths.

Infected

Some 17,000 people out of Trinidad and Tobago's population of 1.3 million have been infected with HIV, including 300 children, officials say. Some 3,600 children under age 15 were living without a mother or father or both because they had died of AIDS, according to 2001 UN estimates.

GLOVER talks about his role as chairman of the board of the TransAfrica Forum .

AP

The Caribbean has the world's second highest infection rate after sub-Saharan Africa. An estimated 2 percent of people, or 500,000,—excluding Cuba where infections rates are low—are HIV-positive, according to the Caribbean Task Force on HIV/AIDS.

The producers of the series, RCN Entertainment, also produce PBS's "Reading Rainbow." The UN helped develop the idea for the series.

Glover is also one of several celebrities who serve as goodwill ambassadors for the UN Development Program to draw attention to poverty.

Visit

After his visit to Trinidad, Glover plans to travel to Jamaica, Maharaj said. A Jamaican film festival plans to present Glover with a lifetime achievement award, organizers said.

The fourth annual Jamerican Film and Music Festival, taking place through Sunday in the northwestern resort town of Montego Bay, will give Glover its third Marcus Garvey Lifetime Achievement Award.

Last year, the award went to British actor Roger Moore, the star of various James Bond films. The first was presented in 2000 to entertainer Harry Belafonte. AP

Broadway-bound play, Broadway musical top London theater awards

By Matt Wolf

LONDON—Caryl Churchill's Broadway-bound "A Number" was honored as the best play and the recent Broadway hit "The Full Monty" won best musical at the annual Evening Standard Theater Awards Monday.

Loss

"The Full Monty" won the top musical prize over such ongoing shows as "Bombay Dreams" despite closing Nov. 23 at a loss said to be in excess of $4 million.

The prizes, decided by a panel of critics and named for London's leading afternoon newspaper, gave the largest number of trophies to several of London's smaller playhouses.

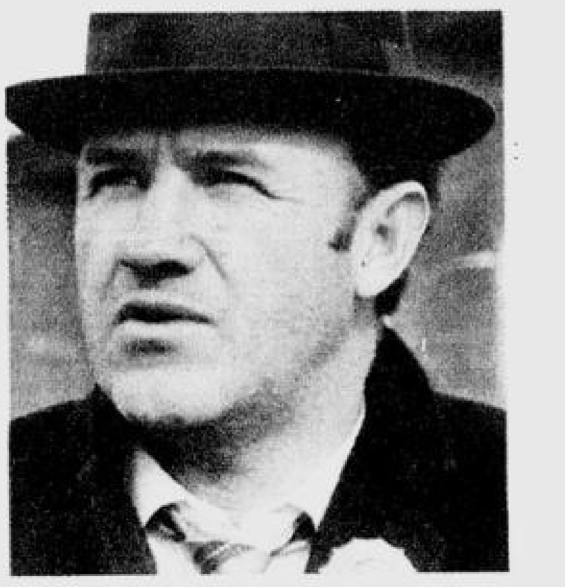
The Royal Court Theater in Chelsea won a clutch of prizes—for best play for "A Number," written by the 64-year-old Churchill, and for most promising playwright for Vassily Sigarev, a 25-year-old writer from the Urals whose play "Plasticine" had a brief run last spring as part of the theater's international season. Ian MacNeil was named best designer for both productions, the one as lavish as the other is spare.

Role

"A Number" is scheduled to open in the spring on Broadway, where Gene Hackman has been talked about to inherit the role originated by Sir Michael Gambon.

The 251-seat Donmar Warehouse did almost as well as the Court, taking two prizes in what is the last season after 10 years of its much-lauded artistic director, Sam Mendes. Mendes won best director for his farewell productions in repertory of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" and Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya." His star, 41-year-old Simon Russell Beale, who plays leading roles in both productions, was named best actor.

In January, the productions transfer to the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York.



HACKMAN. Will "inherit" Michael Gambon's lead role in "A Number."

Best actress went to Clare Higgins, who played the lonely, sexually frustrated landlady of a young Vincent Van Gogh in Nicholas Wright's "Vincent In Brixton," one of several Standard prize-winners that have since closed.

Rare instance

Marking a rare instance of an Evening Standard award going to an American, 21-year-old film actor Jake Gyllenhaal ("Moonlight Mile," "Donnie Darko") was named best actor for his performance last spring as a New York slacker in the Kenneth Lonergan play, "This Is Our Youth."

The Evening Standard's special award went to artistic director Mark Rylance of Shakespeare's Globe Theater, the reconstruction of the Elizabethan-era playhouse on the south bank of the Thames. *AP*

German comedy about Nazis during WWII finally makes its debut on German TV

By Erik Kirschbaum

BERLIN—The first German-made film comedy about the Nazis has made its long-awaited debut on German television, shattering a half-century taboo on poking fun at the country's nightmare past.

"Goebbels and Geduldig," a farce about the Nazi propaganda minister and a good-humored Jewish lookalike who swap places in 1944, was aired on Wednesday evening, treating the greatest tragedy in German history as a comedy.

Touchy

The topic was so touchy that its nervous producers spent seven years developing it—with a script rewritten 18 times—and sent their finished project on a two-year odyssey to small international film festivals to test the reception.

They finally showed the film at home at a time when younger Germans—as the last generation with living memories of World War Two dies off—tend to view the Nazi era as distant history rather than a moral burden.

"For young people born after 1970 the Nazi past is as far away from their lives as the period of Napoleon's aggression," said Gabi Schlattmann, from the SWR public television network that produced the film.

Critics

But critics of "Goebbels and Geduldig," which aired on primetime on the ARD network, failed to find it funny. The conservative daily Die Welt said the work may deserve plaudits for effort, but failed for a simple reason.

"A comedy doesn't have to be historically accurate, but it must at least be humorous," it wrote. "Unfortunately 'Goebbels and Geduldig' is a tragic failure on that score." Even the star of the movie acknowledged its limitations.

"It's not the most courageous film ever made," said Ulrich Muehe, 49, who plays both Goebbels and the lookalike Jewish concentration camp inmate superbly.

"It's a bold effort, but stops short. It reflects how far we can go in Germany with the Nazis right now. Maybe in five years we can do a fully-fledged Nazi comedy."

Parodies about the Nazis have long been made in Hollywood and elsewhere. Charlie Chaplin's "The Great Dictator" came out in 1940, long before Hitler's Third Reich collapsed.

The Italian director Roberto Benigni won an Academy award for his "Life Is Beautiful." Films by Mel Brooks and Ernst Lubitsch also ridiculed the Nazis. The popular American television series "Hogan's Heroes" was lampooning fat, clumsy and incompetent Nazis three decades ago. Yet German filmmakers avoided the painful past. Countless somber and guilt-inducing documentary films filled that void.

Double

The film, which features some of Germany's leading acting talent spoofing Hitler and Eva Braun among others, is centered around the Jewish Goebbels double, named Harry Geduldig.

When Goebbels visits Geduldig alone in a room at a concentration camp, the Jew manages to escape while Goebbels remains behind, kicking and screaming in a straitjacket because no one believes he is the real Goebbels.

Geduldig, who had earlier entertained fellow inmates by imitating Goebbels's famous "Do you want a total war?" speech, successfully fakes a Goebbels-style address at a rally in Nuremberg and has no trouble convincing Hitler himself he is Goebbels. Only Goebbels' sex-hungry wife has doubts.

"Is it even possible to be able to laugh at all about the Nazi horrors? Especially for Germans?" wrote Der Tagesspiegel newspaper.

"It is a minor miracle that a bold attempt like this made it through to prime time. One wishes it bon voyage but fears it is instead a flop." *Reuters*

Spielberg to bring Belgian cartoon hero to life on the big screen

LOS ANGELES—Hollywood moviemaker Steven Spielberg is to bring cartoon hero Tintin and pals Captain Haddock and Professor Calculus to life in a live action feature film, industry sources said Friday last week.

Young reporter

The maker of "E.T: The Extra Terrestrial," "Jaws" and "Raiders of the Lost Ark" will reenact the adventures of the intrepid young reporter for Universal Pictures and his own production firm, DreamWorks Pictures.

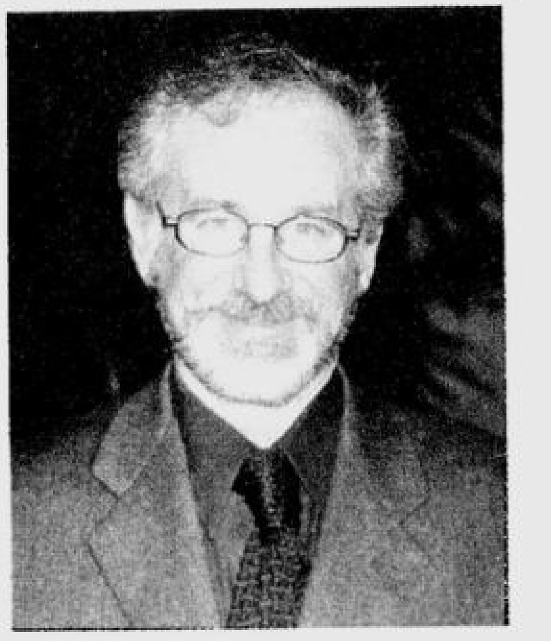
"The project will definitely go ahead, we are just waiting for a deal on the rights to "Tintin" to be finalized," an industry source told AFP.

Spielberg and producing partner Kathleen Kennedy are negotiating for the rights to the character, created by Belgian cartoonist Herge in 1929, with the firm that holds them, Moulinsart.

The internationally-read comic strip "Tintin" has developed something of a cult following over the years, keeping sales of the books featuring the youth reporter and his partners in adventure strong.

Curses

Drunken Captain Haddock—who utters strings of exclamatory curses like "billions of bilious blue blistering barnacles—Professor Cuthbert Calculus, the investigator twins Thomson and Thompson and Tintin's faithful little dog Snowy are all expected to feature in the film.



SPIELBERG. The film will be financed by the Universal and DreamWorks studios.

"Tintin," whose author's real name was Georges Remi, was first published in a weekly supplement of the Belgian newspaper Le Vingtieme Siecle and has been translated into more than 50 languages.

Several animated films of the cowlick-sporting reporter have already been made, but Hollywood has yet to try a live action film version. *AFP*

Commemorative stamp in honor of Cary Grant

LOS ANGELES—Actor Cary Grant on Tuesday became the latest Hollywood legend to be immortalized on the US postal stamp.

The 37-cent stamp honors the star's career in Hollywood spanning more than 30 years.

Romantic comedies

"Grant was best known for starring in romantic comedies such as 'An Affair to Remember' (1957)," the US Postal Service said in a statement, noting that he was often teamed with Hollywood's leading ladies.

They included Katharine Hepburn, who starred with Grant in "Bringing Up Baby" (1938) and "The Philadelphia Story," (1940), and both Ginger Rogers and Marilyn Monroe in "Monkey Business" (1952).

Grant also starred with Grace Kelly in "To Catch a Thief" (1955) and with Audrey Hepburn in "Charade" (1963).

"Grant demonstrated his versatility as an actor throughout his career," the Postal Service said. *AFP*

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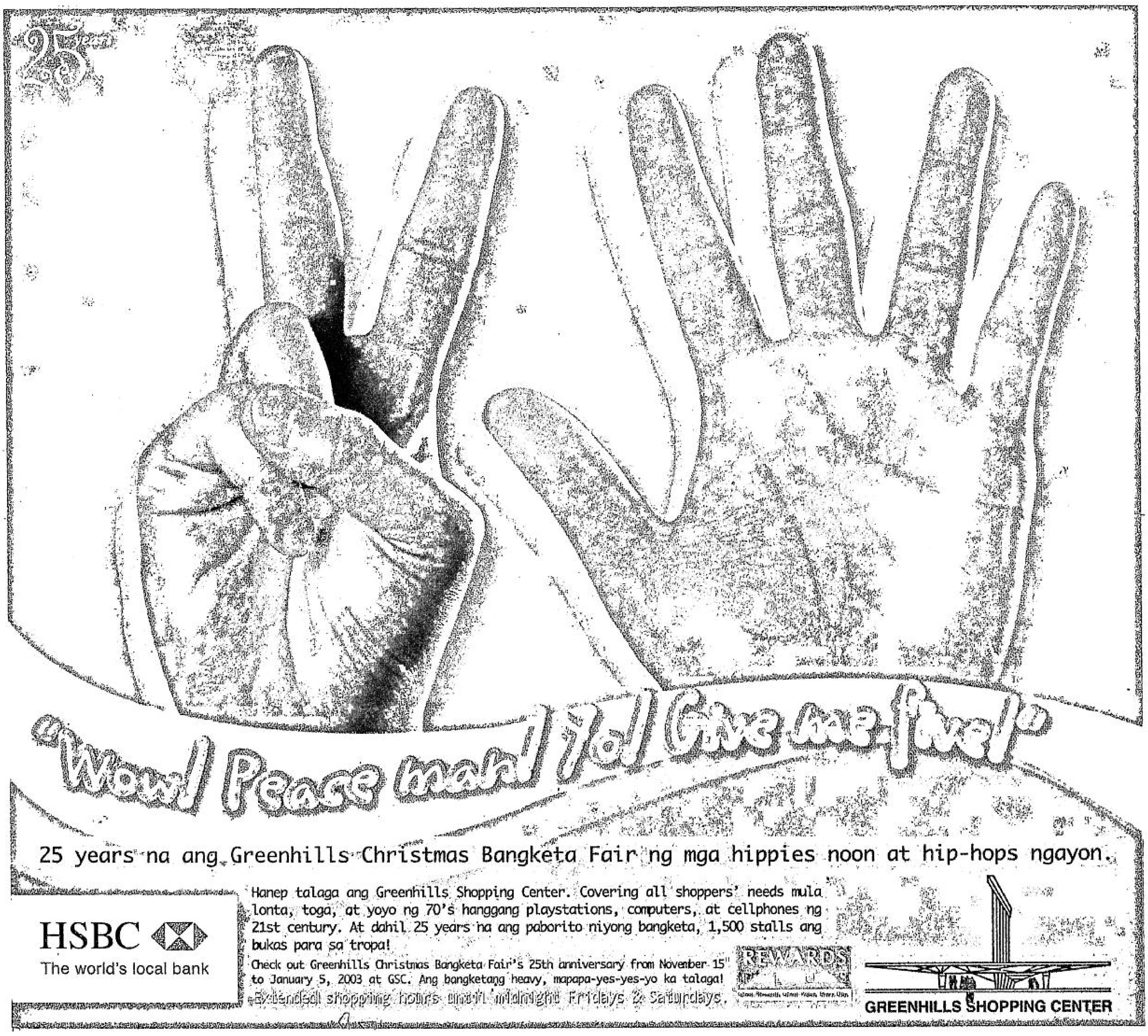
Queso de Bola
Mahalagang nasa mesa
pag Noche Buena.
Magnolia
A subsidiary of
San Miguel Pure Foods
San Miguel Corporation

Taon taon talaga, kasama yan sa handa. Ang Noche Buena'ng walang Magnolia® Queso de Bola?
Parang kainan na walang plato't kutsara.


25 years
"Wow! Peace man! Yo! Give me five!"
REWARDS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER
HSBC
The world's local bank

25 years na ang Greenhills Christmas Bangketa Fair ng mga hippies noon at hip-hops ngayon.

Hanep talaga ang Greenhills Shopping Center. Covering all shoppers' needs mula lonta, toga, at yoyo ng 70's hanggang playstations, computers, at cellphones ng 21st century. At dahil 25 years na ang paborito niyong bangketa, 1,500 stalls ang bukas para sa tropa!

Check out Greenhills Christmas Bangketa Fair's 25th anniversary from November 15 to January 5, 2003 at GSC. Ang bangketang heavy, mapapa-yes-yes-yo ka talaga!

Extended shopping hours until midnight Fridays & Saturdays.

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₱170 lang

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✓ **Proven Magaan sa Bulsa!**
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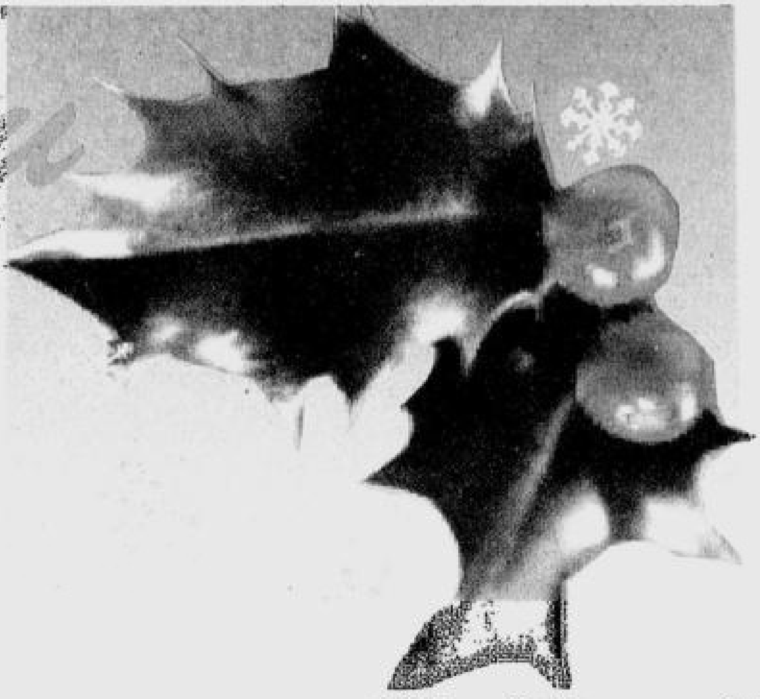
Pre-Christmas SHOPPING

Aggie Pinili, Account Manager
sprojects@inquirer.com.ph
Aries Espinosa, Editor

What can I give you this Christmas?



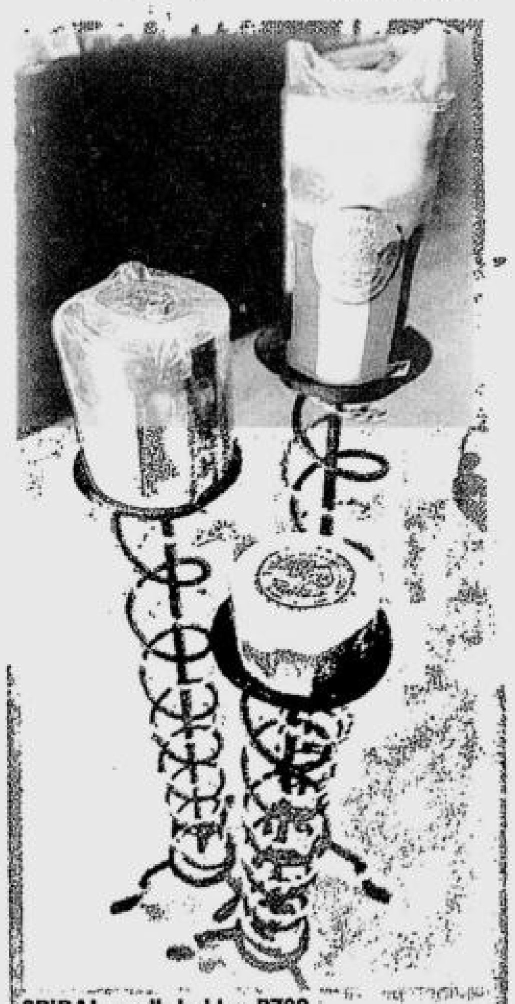
Gift suggestions and other pre-Christmas finds for the early shoppers who want more time to enjoy a shopping spree

SHOPPING is one exhilarating yet tiresome task—walking for hours in the mall, looking around, choosing and comparing prices. But after a half-day of shopping and carrying all those bags of goodies, no one will bother about tired feet and depleted cash, but relish that feeling of gladness.

Shopping can really make one happy, but this coming Christmas season, shopping can be a stressful activity with all the people trooping to malls. We suggest that you shop now because this early, malls are really opening up bazaars and putting lots of items on sale.

To help you out, we brave the South at the sprawling Festival Supermall (Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City) and checked out some items that would be perfect gifts for friends and families.

CHRISTMAS/13



SPIRAL candle holder, P799

JOYCE, an angel Teddy Bear, P999

CANUS goat milk and lotion, P545

TEACUP set, P165

Get the look from someone who knows about the beauty of giving. For rosy cheeks, *Linda Cantello Fake It Transparent Tint* in Gym Bunny. Lips get holiday red with *Bloom Lipglaze* in Glimpse on top of *Sue Devitt Balanced Matte Lipstick* in Woolloomooloo. *Headwear Phytophusion Pliable Putty* keeps jingling curls in place. With *Smashbox Pressed Powder* in Smashin' Translucent, skin looks calm and bright. Dashing through the snow? Don't forget the *Burt's Bees Foot Cream*. Find these and more at the Beauty Bar, all ready for giving and receiving, in our signature holiday packaging for 2002.

Beauty bar
Hey, beautiful.

The Power Plant Mall-Rockwell Center 898-2042 / 898-2043 • Glorietta 2-Ayala Center 810-0525 / 810-0684 • Corte de las Palmas-Alabang Town Center 842-8350 / 842-8351
Shangri-La Plaza Mall 687-0018 • Katipunan Avenue-Loyola Heights 433-0188 • Festival Supermall 850-4025 • The Podium 633-7808 • Greenbelt 3-Ayala Center 757-4577

Araneta Center's Christmas Bazaar

ARANETA Center opened a Christmas Bazaar with a difference.

A combination of flea market, an *ukay-ukay* section, Chinese curio shop and a place for food trippers, Araneta Center's Christmas Bazaar is an all-night, all-day street bazaar located parallel to Aurora Boulevard along Gen. Malvar Street.

Teddy R. Asuncion, COO and president of Araneta Center Inc., led company officials during Saturday's (Nov. 23) ribbon-cutting to formally open the Christmas Bazaar up to Jan. 7, 2003.

Theme for this year's bazaar is "It's Value for Money for All Items."

There will also be a Midnight Mass (Simbang Gabi) at 9 p.m. starting on Dec. 15 up to Dec. 23.

Five organizers joined efforts in providing an array of shoes, bags, clothes, including batik, toys, home décor interspersed with food and snacks of all kinds sourced from as far north as the Ilocos region and the Muslim areas in Mindanao.

To entertain shoppers, Lorna Fabian, ACI's specialty leasing manager, has invited several bands to provide live entertainment every Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Biggest Christmas Adventures at Araneta Center

Araneta Center will have a Festival of Chorale and Oratorical contests, the lighting of the giant Christmas Tree and the Elephant World altogether on its Christmas package called the "Biggest Christmas Adventure at the Araneta Center" as its way of bringing cheers and the holiday spirit this coming Christmas season.

Different sites within Araneta Center in Quezon City have been chosen as venue for the finals of the Festival considered the top cultural event in the celebration of the 4th World Meeting of Families (FWMF) next year from Jan. 23 to 26 in Manila.

Eliminations for the contests are in full swing in various schools within the National Capital Region.

Organized by the Archdiocese of Manila, the Council of the Laity of Manila (CLM) and the Department of Education and sponsored by the Araneta Center, the festival goes on record as the biggest cultural event of the year involving more than 200 public schools under the Archdiocese of Manila.

No less than Jaime Cardinal Sin has given his imprimatur for the festival when he signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with officials of the Council of the Laity of Manila and Department of Education and the Araneta Center Inc. at the Archbishop's Palace at Villa San Miguel in Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong.

ABS-CBN has tapped the country's top entertainers, among them, Superstar Nora Aunor for its Christmas tableau when the 85-foot Christmas tree was traditionally lighted last Sunday, Nov. 24 in front of the historic Araneta Coliseum before city government officials led by Mayor Feliciano Belmonte and Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista.

Elephant world

The 10 elephants and their *mahouts* (trainers) are to be garbed with holiday dresses for their Christmas offering in their performance at the Elephant World, a special place just outside of the Big Dome and closest to the Value Station, the favorite haunt of the bargain hunters nowadays.

The elephants perform daily – at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. – with the exception on their rest days on Tuesdays. Tickets, priced at P150, P250 and P350, are available at the Elephant World and in all SM Ticketnet outlets.

Center-wide discount sales, special promos and gifts galore also await Christmas shoppers in Ali Mall and Farmers Plaza where the 'Decorate an Elephant' promo starts from Dec. 1 to Dec. 31.

Under the rules of the promo, shoppers who make at least P200 purchase will be given an elephant paper mache and gift check also worth P200 that he can use to buy in either mall.

A cash prize of P100,000 is at stake for the best-painted elephant paper mache plus various gifts for other winners in the contest.

Value station

All this happens within walking distance of Value Station, the newest place for bargain hunters where low-priced Chinese products have started to surprise housewives from all over.

The area cannot be missed because it is where Christmas lanterns of all shapes and sizes are available on bargains too, moving and twinkling brighter and brighter during the Parolan at the Araneta Center from Nov. 16 to Dec. 31 this year.

Christmas bazaar

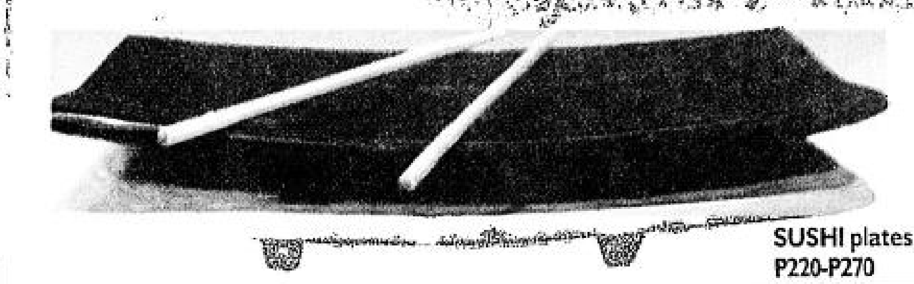
A Christmas bazaar, complete with food, snacks and things of all kinds, adds to the shopping excitement along Gen. Malvar at the foot of the Aurora Tower within eyesight of the rising Gateway Mall.

Chicco opens flagship store at the Podium

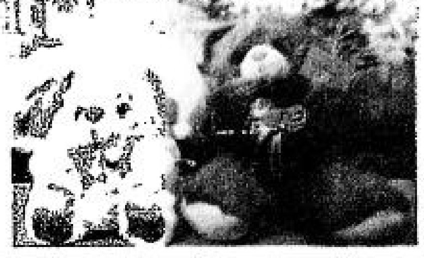
"Convenient shopping" is the ultimate thrust of the highly popular infant store, Chicco when it recently opened its flagship store at the Podium. A lot of moms took part in the celebration headed by the owners Mr. & Ms Alberto Yao and their daughters Liza and Maye Yao, executive vice president and marketing manager respectively, of the Chicco boutique chain of stores. A dream come true for moms, the new Chicco boutique – Podium is the perfect haven for all babies' needs. There is no other store that boasts of the most complete line of mother and baby care accessories under one roof. The boutique is so mom-friendly that even more than 10 moms with strollers in tow will find it convenient to roam inside the store without having to bump into something. What's more, Chicco has provided some attractive seats for moms where they can relax while shopping and browse on some Chicco baby guide books. Still attuned with mothers' needs, the Chicco boutique-Podium has also provided a special area where mothers can let their kids have limitless fun playing with Chicco Casa Garden toys displayed such as the Chicco slides, kiddie tables and chairs and Chicco houses. And for added treats to Chicco boys and girls, the Chicco boutique – Podium also highlights its image dolls, Chiccolo and Chiccola. These are toy dolls with baby accessories like pacifiers, feeding bottles and bathtubs. These dolls even have miniature high chairs and strollers that are ideal for role-play and stimulation of a child's imagination and creativity.

For quality children's shoes, nothing beats the Italian made Chicco shoes mothers can rely on for years. Even the popular Chicco nursery items are well highlighted in the store. It's a whole showcase of feeding bottles, nipples, teethers, sterilizers and health care accessories distinctively Chicco. And who wouldn't appreciate Chicco's line of mother care accessories aptly called Mamma Donna line? Stylish maternity clothes, shoes, breast pads and pumps are all made available at the Chicco boutique-Podium.

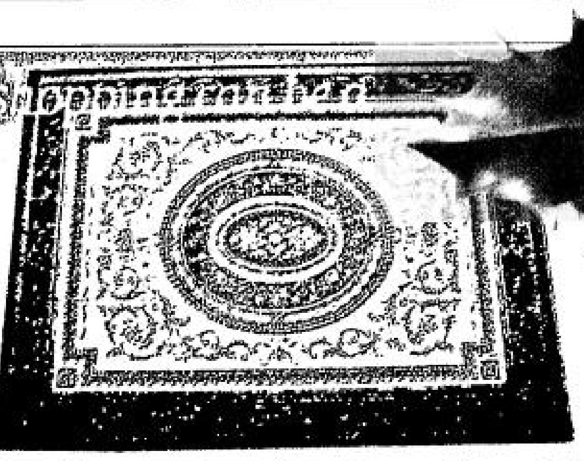
Shopping can really make one happy but this coming Christmas season, shopping can be a stressful activity with all the people trooping to malls



SUSHI plates, P220-P270



CUDDLY stuffed toys



Ito ang BAGO!

New
FarmersPlaza so sulit, lagi kang uulit!

Isang sakay lang sa MRT

Pizza Hut Jollibee 7 Eleven DUNKIN DONUTS Goldilocks
MENDREZ JAG bench Lee Fairmart
INFORMATICS COMPUTER INSTITUTE PUYAT SPORTS Handyman RCPI
National Book Store Rustan SUPERSTORE Food PLAZA Ricky Reyes Ideal VISION CENTER The Eyewear Specialist

Business Hours for the Holiday Season

Nov. 29 to Dec. 12	10 AM TO 9 PM
Dec. 13 to Dec. 23	10 AM TO 10 PM
Dec. 24	10 AM TO 7 PM
Dec. 25 & Jan. 01	12 NN TO 8 PM
Dec. 26 to Dec. 30	10 AM TO 8 PM
Dec. 31	10 AM TO 6 PM

Araneta Center
Metro Centro, Quezon City

PHOTOS BY EGAY MONTAÑA

What can I give you this Christmas?

From page 11

Golden gifts

If you want your Christmas to turn gold for your friends and loved ones then we suggest that you check out some items at JB Woodcraft at the fourth level. The furniture store, though selling high-end pieces with intricate designs for the AB market, has some lovely wooden items with gold finishing and are perfect displays for dining areas or living rooms.

Ranging from P500 up, these items are carved golden ducks, chickens, and shells. There are also classy twisted candleholders (P1,200) and other knick-knacks for the curious—all seemingly made in gold. The store also exports its products abroad and one is assured that the items they choose are of high quality and look definitely costly!

One for mom

It may be pricey but it's the kind of gift that last a lifetime. A center chest is an ideal gift for mothers and housewives who love to collect different kinds of stuff. Made of imported wood, the chest can serve many functions in the living room. The half-chest, as it is called, can be a centerpiece and a storage box in one. One half can keep magazines or newspapers, while the other half is designed with small boxes for pens, candles, and other small stuff. Locally made, these chests cost between P6,500 and P21,000 and are available at The Barnyard located at the 4th floor of Festival Mall.

Other household accessories that are perfect gift suggestions are hanging plate holder and wall wine racks. Mostly painted in black, the hanging plate holder costs P635. Square terra cotta saucers for candles are available at P110.

The Play and Display shop offers trendy gift ideas. Known for bright color household pieces, the shop sells items like lamps and coffee cup sets. Maki lamps can be bought at an affordable P165. Bamboo floor lamps that stand about 4 feet is also available at P790. The cute small teacup and coffee cup sets are available in blue and yellow colors and cost P165 each set.

Linens used as accents in sofas and curtains can be bought from P970 to P1,250. Intricately designed linens are also perfect as wall decorations.

Another home décor, which is perfect on shelves and corners, are pot earthenware. They come in three shapes: triangle, P290; square, P290; and rectangle, P390.

Beauty secrets for men and women

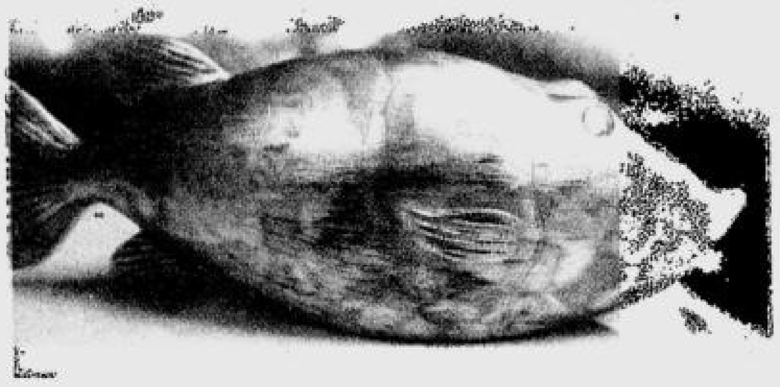
There is one cosmetic hit among women nowadays. This is the Linda Cartell Surface. It's like a foundation, which can be applied to the cheeks to make it rosy. For P1,250, Linda Cartell Surface is available in six colors and comes in liquid and cream form.

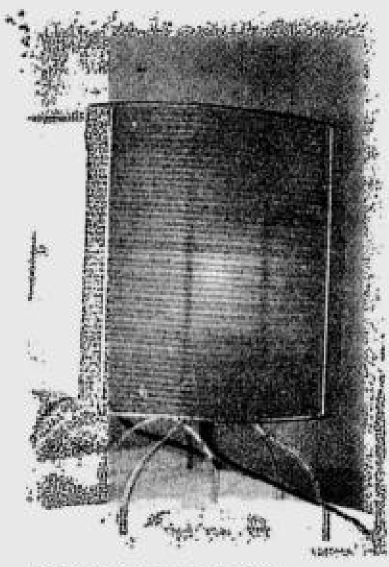
For a change, why not give a "beauty" kit for men? Essentials is a men's kit which includes a shaving cream, lip balm, body cleanser, moisturizer, and hand and body lotion. This one set costs P2,750.

CHRISTMAS/14

NATIVITY fountain bowls, P3,800

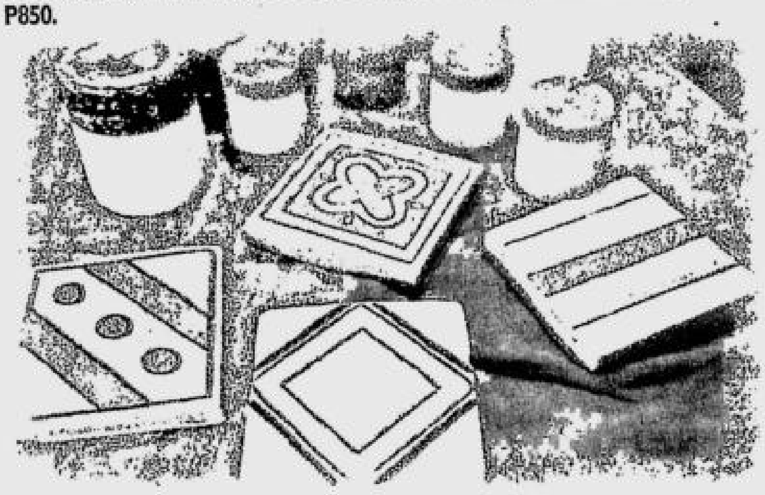
It may be pricey but it's the kind of gift that would last a lifetime



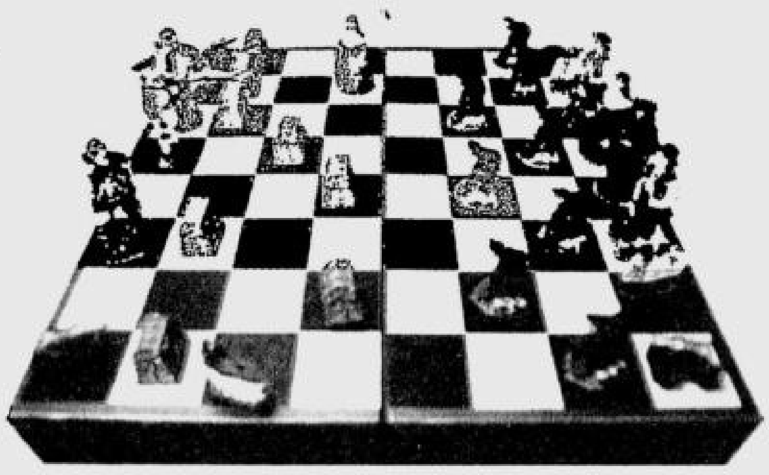


BAMBOO lamp, P1,490

(FROM left) The Essentials, P750; The Cookbook, P595; Head Wear, P195; Cosmetic Box, P1,650; SurFace, P1,250; Canus Goat's Milk lotion, P545; Fruit Frappe Body Creme, P595; Body and Soul CD, P850.



CANDLE saucers, P110 each



PIRATES set chess board, P4,000 plus

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Christmas . . .

From page 13

The soap store

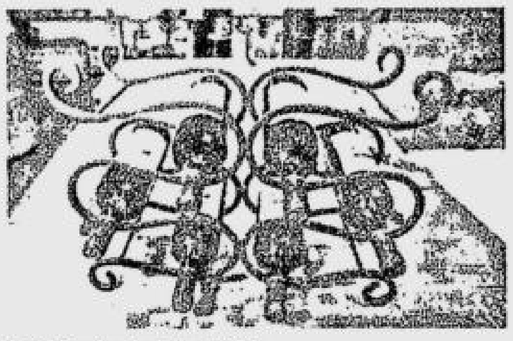
Soaps, soaps, soaps (not the ones seen on TV every afternoon till night) and more varieties, scents and colors are sold at Bath Origins. Ranging from P55-P80, the soaps, about 55 varieties of them, are all made from natural ingredients and serve various purposes other than for cleansing. Avocado soap has nourishing properties. Carrot soap helps nourish and moisturize skin. Chocolat soap has a sweet smell and mint that refreshes. Cucumber and milk helps in lightening dark areas around the face and eyes. Check out some of the items such as essential oils and the flower and herb collection.

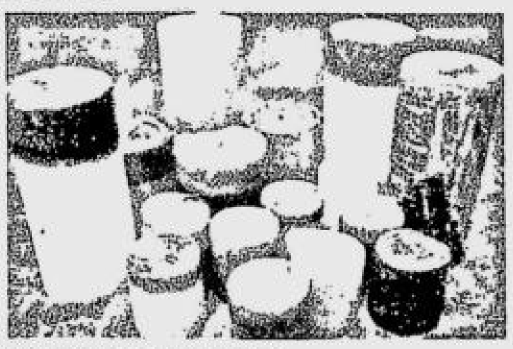
THE ESSENTIALS for men, P750

ZEN Garden (rocks and candles), P159.75

BONNETS

BATH Origins soap, P55 each


LOOP wine holder, P800


SCENTED candles, P60 up

SM Appliance Center

AMERICAN HERITAGE
P2,995 AHMO-20 MICROWAVE OVEN
- 20 litre large oven
- 30-min. timer
- 800 watts

AMERICAN HERITAGE
P349.75 AHCK-17 ELECTRIC KETTLE
- Detachable base
- W/ light indicator
- W/ water level indicator

AMERICAN HERITAGE
P1,499 AHTB-22 TURBO BROILER
- Easy push down switch
- W/ plastic stand
- Tempered glass body
- 1,350 watts

Christmas Gift Specials

AMERICAN HERITAGE
P499 AHOT-28 OVEN TOASTER
- 15-min. timer
- Stainless steel grill
- 600 watts

STEAM FAST
P4,995 SF-350 PROFESSIONAL STEAMER
- Up to 45 mins. of steam
- Retractable pole for easy storage
- W/ roller for portable use

AMERICAN HERITAGE
P1,995 AHVC-41 VACUUM CLEANER
- Push button roll-back plug
- Washable filter
- W/ dust level indicator
- 1,200 watts

AMERICAN HERITAGE
P899.75 AHDFS-38 FOOT SPA
- Vibrating massage
- 4 massaging rollers
- W/ easy drain spout
- Non-slip rubber foot rest

HANABISHI
P599.75 SRC-18FS RICE COOKER
- W/ steamer
- 10-cup capacity
- 700 watts

PROMAC
P899 TURBO AIRE FLOOR FAN
- 16" fan blades
- W/ oscillator

UNION
P649.75 UJB-981 BLENDER
- W/ pulse mode
- W/ 2-speed indicator
- Non-slip base

HANABISHI
P675 HS-1 GAS STOVE
- Teflon-coated
- Automatic ignition
- Heavy-duty support

PROMAC
P5,995 DVD-4000 DVD PLAYER
- VCD, MP3 & DVD player
- DTS surround w/ Karaoke Function
- Multi-system (PAL / NTSC)

Holiday Shopping Spree Runs Thru December 31, 2002.

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Auldey Race Tin-II now in stores

IT'S BIGGER and more realistic than ever!

After the successful launch of Auldey Race Tin-1, here comes the Auldey Race Tin-II, which can run on any smooth surface and does not require racetracks. They are still powered by small batteries and radio frequencies so you can play anytime, anywhere.

Auldey Race Tin-II comes in a new, classy, and internationally patented carry-anywhere container.

But the best thing about the new Auldey Race Tin-II is that the cars have front suspension and rear differential. Just turn the newly designed remote control to any direction you want and see it move just like a real car.

Plus, you can also be assured that all Auldey products are top quality because it has recently been awarded a certificate by the International Organization for Standardization based in Geneva, Switzerland (ISO 9001:2000 QMS). The international standard mark means that all Auldey products are efficient and safe to use.

The Auldey Race Tin-II is now available at your favorite toy stores and department stores.

BITS Clips

Pre-Christmas bazaar at Rockwell

PREPARATIONS for the holiday season shift to higher gear as the Rockwell Club holds a pre-Christmas bazaar today, Nov. 30, and Dec. 1, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Rockwell Tennis Covered Court, Hidalgo Drive, Rockwell Club, Makati City. More than 50 exhibitors will participate in the early Christmas bazaar organized by the country's newest events management group, Exhibits in Action Corp. (Exact). Shoppers can choose from a wide array of gift items perfect for the holidays. Products include toys, apparel, footwear, fashion accessories, bags, house decors and furniture, Christmas decors, novelty items, native handicraft, car accessories and corporate giveaways. For inquiries, call Jing Modino or Lory Salvador of Exact secretariat at 404-0249 and 404-0629.

3-man show at Ortigas

ARTISTS Edgar Doctor, Lino Severino and Ching Caluag are currently holding a three-man show at the main lobby of Discovery Centre, 25 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City titled "Variations 3." Up for public viewing will be the artists' latest works, mostly water color, on various themes such as landscapes, seascapes, still lifes, pastoral scenes and floral motifs, among others. Part of the proceeds will go to the Vince Hizon Foundation, which aims to assist poor but deserving elementary school children. Exhibit runs until Nov. 30. For inquiries, call 635-2222 local 3212.

Sale for bargain hunters

DESIGNER Depot, the pioneer factory outlet mall concept in the country, is having its 3-day Pre-Christmas Sale until Dec. 1 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Quirino branch and 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Shaw branch. All items from more than a hundred stores (branded and non-branded) will be sold with additional discounts on top of already discounted prices. Branded outlets like Levi's, Kickers, Dockers, Jag, Lee, Converse, Maldita, Skechers, Big & Small, GBX and Ibiza will extend its 25 to 70-percent discounts. Non-branded stores will also grant Buy 1 Take 1, Buy 5 Take 1, Everything 100 and 200 promos. Designer Depot stores are located at 1400 Quirino Avenue corner South Superhighway, Manila, and at 500 Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. For inquiries, call 563-7881 for Quirino and 535-5297 for Shaw.

ICMS Malolos celebrates 40

THE IMMACULATE Conception Minor Seminary (ICMS) of the Diocese of Malolos will celebrate the 40th year of its foundation on Nov. 30 at the ICMS Compound in Barangay Tabe, Guiguinto, Bulacan. All ICMS alumni are invited to the alumni homecoming titled "Apatnapu Kami: Isang Pamilya Noon, Isang Angkan Ngayon." Registration begins at the ICMS Lobby at 2 p.m. Games will follow at 3 p.m. Holy Mass will be celebrated at 6 p.m. Those who wish to participate in the games must bring white shirts (for batches 1966 to 1989) or blue shirts (for batches 1990 to 2002). For more details about the event, call Fr. Nick F. Lalog at (044)662-1620, Gil Mangoba at 0916-3068742, Alan Luna at 0916-9235909, lawyer Gerry Pascual at 0919-8361992, or Fr. Ato Tuazon, ICMS rector, at (044)794-0040.

Choir competition

GUESTS and shoppers will be treated to heartwarming and merry holiday tunes as Festival Supermall in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang launches the "Festival of Carols: A Chorale Competition", the opening salvo of the mall's Yuletide celebration dubbed "The Great Christmas Show." Supported by SKYCable, the competition showcases the talent and creativity of various church, community or school-based choirs in rendering well-loved and popular carols a cappella either in Filipino, English, or a medley using both languages. The event will be held at the Expo Trade and Music Hall, 4th level, on Sunday, Dec. 1 (elimination) and Sunday, Dec. 15 (grand finals) starting at 2 p.m. For inquiries, call Festival Supermall's Stephen Ustare at 850-3517.

E-mail: pr_junior_inquirer@inquirer.com.ph

Dalawa ang JI ngayong Sabado!

Junior INQUIRER
Second Section
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2002 ✦ 12 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 7, NUMBER 9
HTTP://YOU.INQ7.NET/JI

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Open Letter to AXN Page 3
I.D.=Thumb Page 6
Flying and Dining Page 10

ASSIGNMENT: FUN!

De La Salle Zobel lets loose its zany side on its "Fun-dation" Day

By Eline Santos

TOM de los Santos and Jude Atienza cheer their way out of the Cheer Boom Bah! booth.

BETOY JOHNSON

NO CLASSES! That must be the best news to any student, and when it's a week-long break, it's a long and very happy break indeed. Students of De La Salle Santiago Zobel in Muntinlupa City celebrated their foundation day last month with their annual school fair.

Instead of Math, Science and Hekasi there were exhibition games, an inter-school speech contest, garden and art exhibits, a battle of the bands, a billiard tournament, field demonstrations, a cheering competition, film showings and the dreaded gimmick booths.

Different kinds of the marriage and jail booths lined the path between the gym and gate 2.

"I was caught sixteen times," smiles one 5th grader who says he didn't have to pay to get out again. "You can escape if you're good enough," he said.

Fifth grader Andrea de Vera explains that "They just catch anybody." When you're caught you can either pay the P20 bail or accept the consequence, such as having your face made up.

If you want to escape getting caught, one tip is to have a drink in your hand. Rules exempt people taking food or drink from being captured. Also, when the music isn't playing, it's break time for everybody so no jailing goes on.

"I don't like the booths because I always get chased around," says Carlo Locsin, grade 5, who was caught four times.

Since student Debbie Decena's fatal accident in 1996 on the fish coaster, there have been no rides during Zobel's school fair.

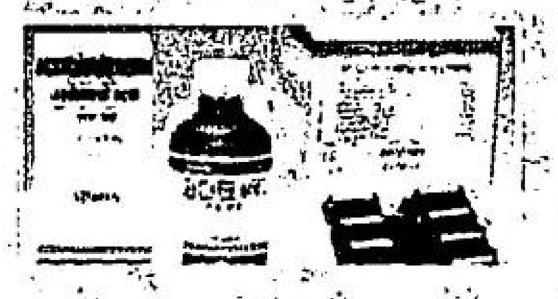
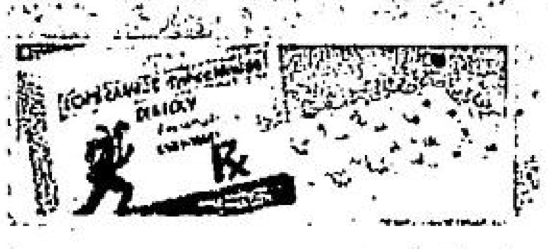
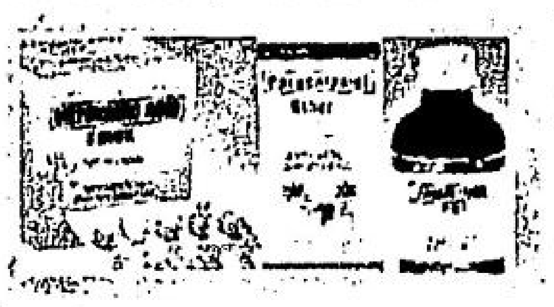
The gimmick booths might feel like the worst part of the fair for those caught, but they add safe fun and excitement to the air.

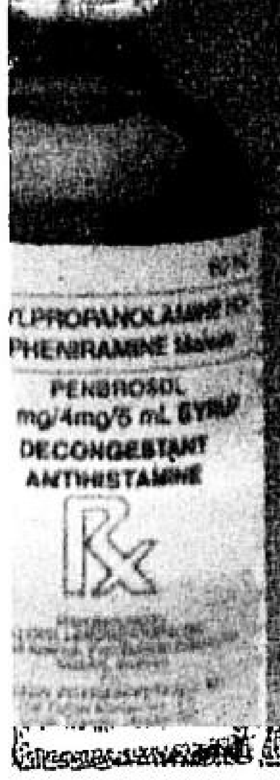
Meanwhile in affiliate school La Salle Greenhills, students were celebrating National Book Week from Nov. 18 to 22.

Ten-year-old EJ Mariano bested his schoolmates to win the jigsaw puzzle

Assignment/ p. 9

SOLVe ANG SAKIT at BUDGET sa alagang SOLVANG.

	PRODUCT BRAND NAME	GENERIC FORMULATION
	1. DECONGESTANT / ANTI-HISTAMINE **PENBROSOL** 12.5 mg/4mg/5ml Syrup	PHENYLPROPANOLAMINE HCI BROMPHENIRAMINE MALEATE
	**2. VITAMIN PREPARATIONS** **CIXTOR** 100mg/5ml Syrup **BRIGHSER** Capsule	ASCORBIC ACID MULTI-VITAMINS w/ LYSINE
	**3. ANTI-DIARRHEA** **DIASOLV** 2mg Capsule	LOPERAMIDE
	4. MUCOLYTIC **LOFENIN** 500mg Capsule	CARBOCISTEINE
	**5. ANALGESIC/ANTIPYRETIC/ANTI-INFLAMMATORY** **FINOX** 250mg Capsule **RIBER** 125mg/5ml Syrup **RESTOLAX** 325mg/200mg Tablet	MEFENAMIC ACID PARACETAMOL PARACETAMOL / IBUPROFEN



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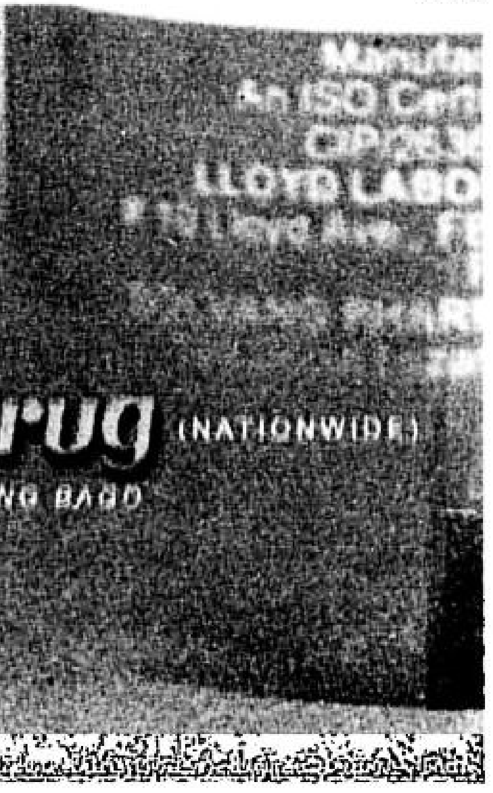

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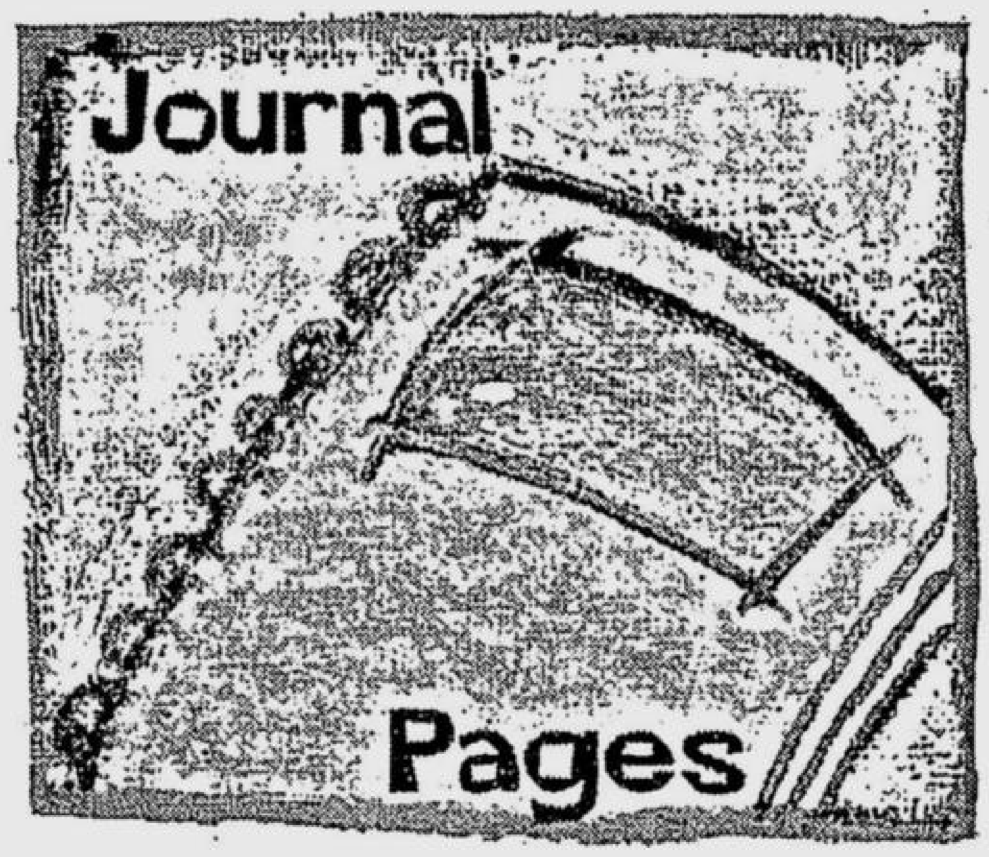
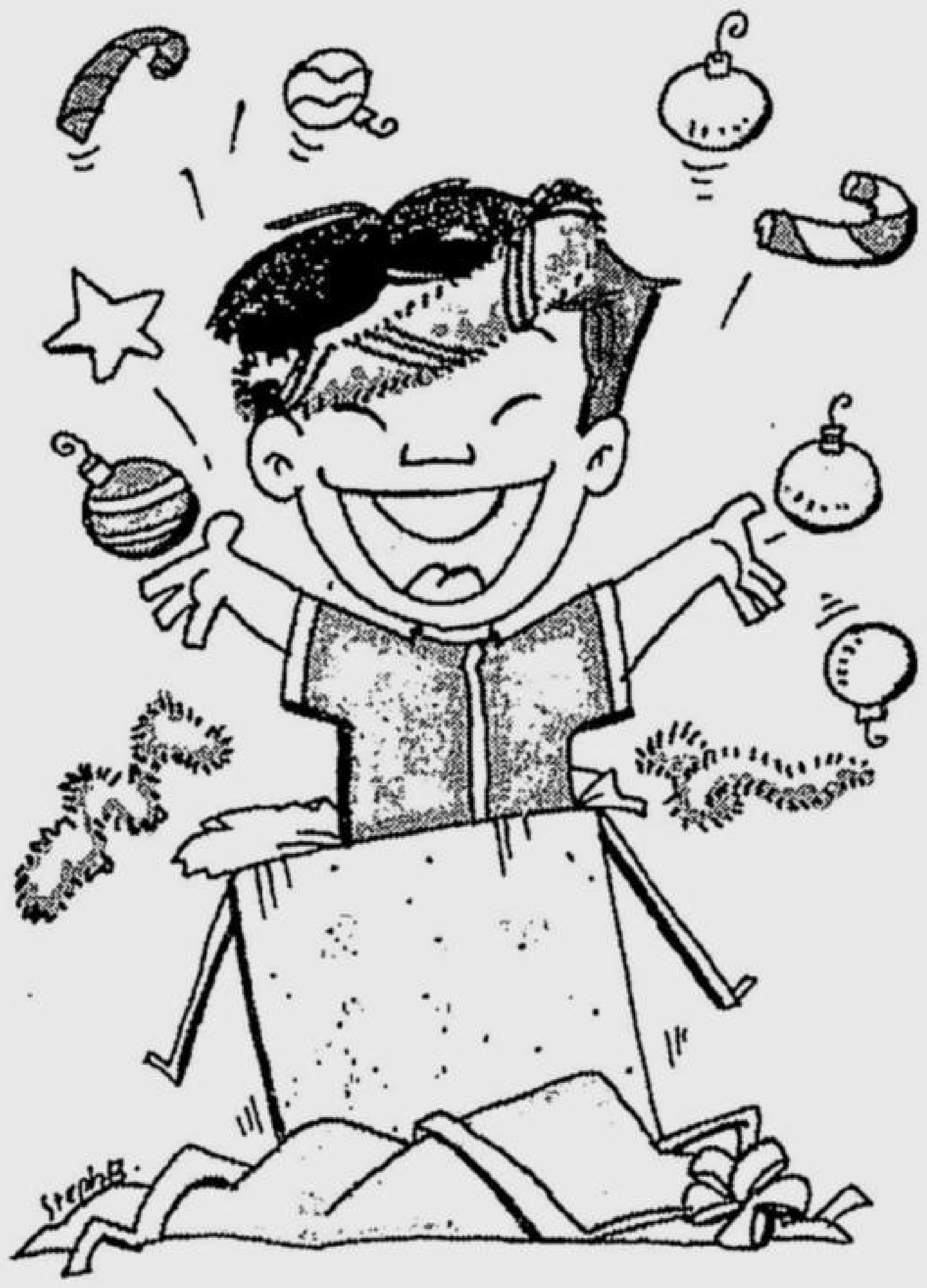


A Tsinoy Christmas

By Stanly Galo C. Sy
Xavier School, Greenhills, San Juan

CHINESE-Filipino kids celebrate Christmas just like any ordinary Filipino kid. We have gift-giving with relatives, friends and siblings. My ninong says, Catholic Tsinoys also look forward to midnight mass if they are Catholics. Some Tsinoy kids, like me, just can't wait for those yearly family reunions at their grandparents' homes. We also look forward to eating the special food that's usually prepared during Christmas. These include salad, fruits, barbecue and spaghetti or pancit lomi, for long life and prosperity the next year.



The *ang paos* or the traditional Chinese red envelopes filled with money, mean luck for the next year and are given to kids by their elders. Unfortunately fewer Tsinoy kids look forward to this tradition.

Also fewer Tsinoy kids look forward to and believe in Santa Claus!

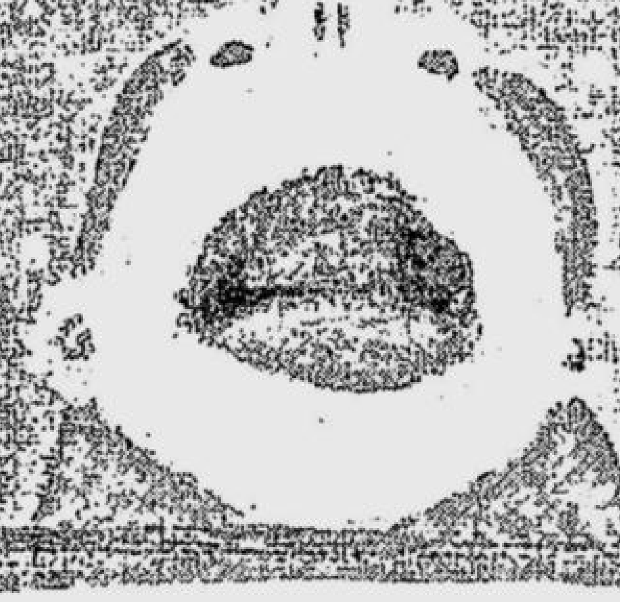
We have Christmas fireworks in Binondo and some kids like roaming around their neighborhood to play or for no particular reason. My uncle says with a bit of laughter that Tsinoy kids of Binondo look forward to seeing the burning tires in the streets or anywhere in Binondo.

I guess I'm no different from characteristics shared above by my uncles. But, if you are Tsinoy too and you don't recognize yourself in the above descriptions, cheer up! You still are Tsinoy. Have a very Merry Tsinoy Chistmas!

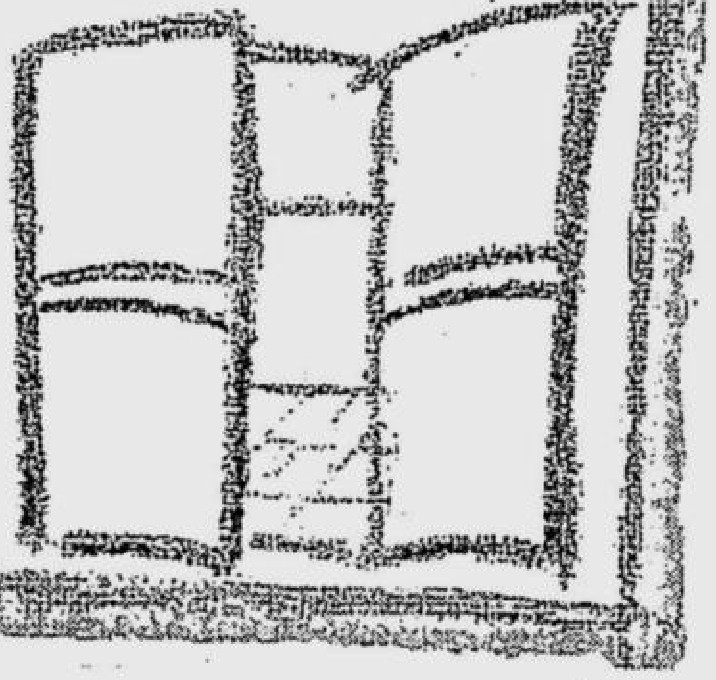
Sound Familiar ?

Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight From JI Readers



You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



An Open Letter to AXN-Philippines

DEAR AXN-Philippines,

I bid you good day. I am writing to you right now because of your Animania weeknight show called "Gensomaden Saiyuki." I am an *otaku* (anime fan) of various anime and I also watch this show. But I think that this show is not really a good show to air on weeknights because many children would be watching TV at this time. This show has very explicit violent images and language.

As you know, this show is about a monk accompanied by three demons in their quest to protect a sutra. In the series, it also shows that they end up killing demons like them in almost every show.

Please don't air it on weeknights. Children, most especially *otakus*, might get traumatized and think that they are one of the characters in the show. This might result in them fighting with their friends or siblings. And because this show does show a lot of killing, I hate to think about it, but it might provoke people into hurting other people unintentionally.

I suggest that you either stop airing this anime or you change its airing date. I suggest weekends so less young people will watch it. Thank you very much for your kind consideration and I hope that you act on my appeal. Truly yours, **STANLY GALO C. SY**, Grade 6-D, Xavier School, San Juan

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RECYCLING IS FOR THE BIRDS.

Asteroid as big as soccer field narrowly misses Earth
PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
Loss of Oakleys doomed Sabaya
Southeast
GMA, Bush
By Carlito Pablo and Juliet Labog

It helps prevent more trees from being cut down and saves the homes of creatures living in the forest. That's why the Inquirer uses recycled paper and soy-based ink to print each issue. And every time you buy a copy, you help the cause to preserve our forests. But you can do more. Sell us your old newspapers (ANY newspaper, both broadsheets and tabloids) and we guarantee to use them to make our future issues. Because our future is the issue.

NEWSPAPER DRIVE

BECAUSE OLD NEWS IS GOOD NEWS.

LAST DAY FOR SELLING YOUR OLD NEWSPAPERS AND TABLOIDS IS ON NOVEMBER 30

For pick-ups:

Accumulate at least 200 kgs. or 17 ft. tall of old newspapers, and the Inquirer will pick them up from you FREE within Metro Manila. Just call Zane Ronquillo at 897-8808 loc. 209/239. FEP will receive newspapers from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm on weekdays in Makati and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm in Cebu and Davao, until Oct. 5, 2002 only.

Please drop off your newspapers at the following Inquirer offices:

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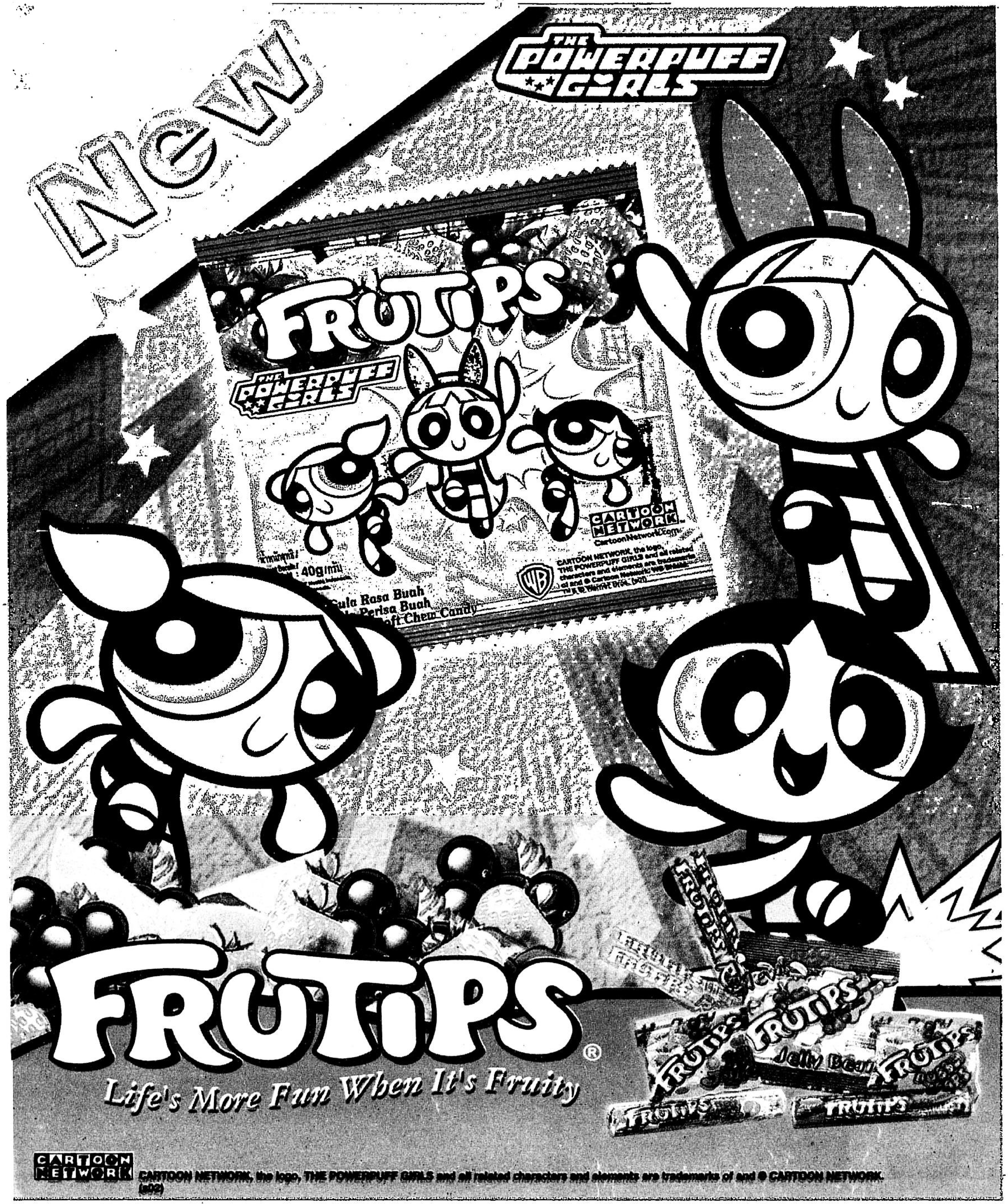
DAVAO: FEP Printing Press loading dock • Bgy. Ma-A, Ma-A Road, Davao City Tel.No.: (082) 244-1711 to 12 Contact person: Rowena Balandra

Sellers will be paid ₱3.00/kilo.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

News that makes a difference.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World Scope

London, England
Yokohama, Japan
Puerto de la Cruz, Spain
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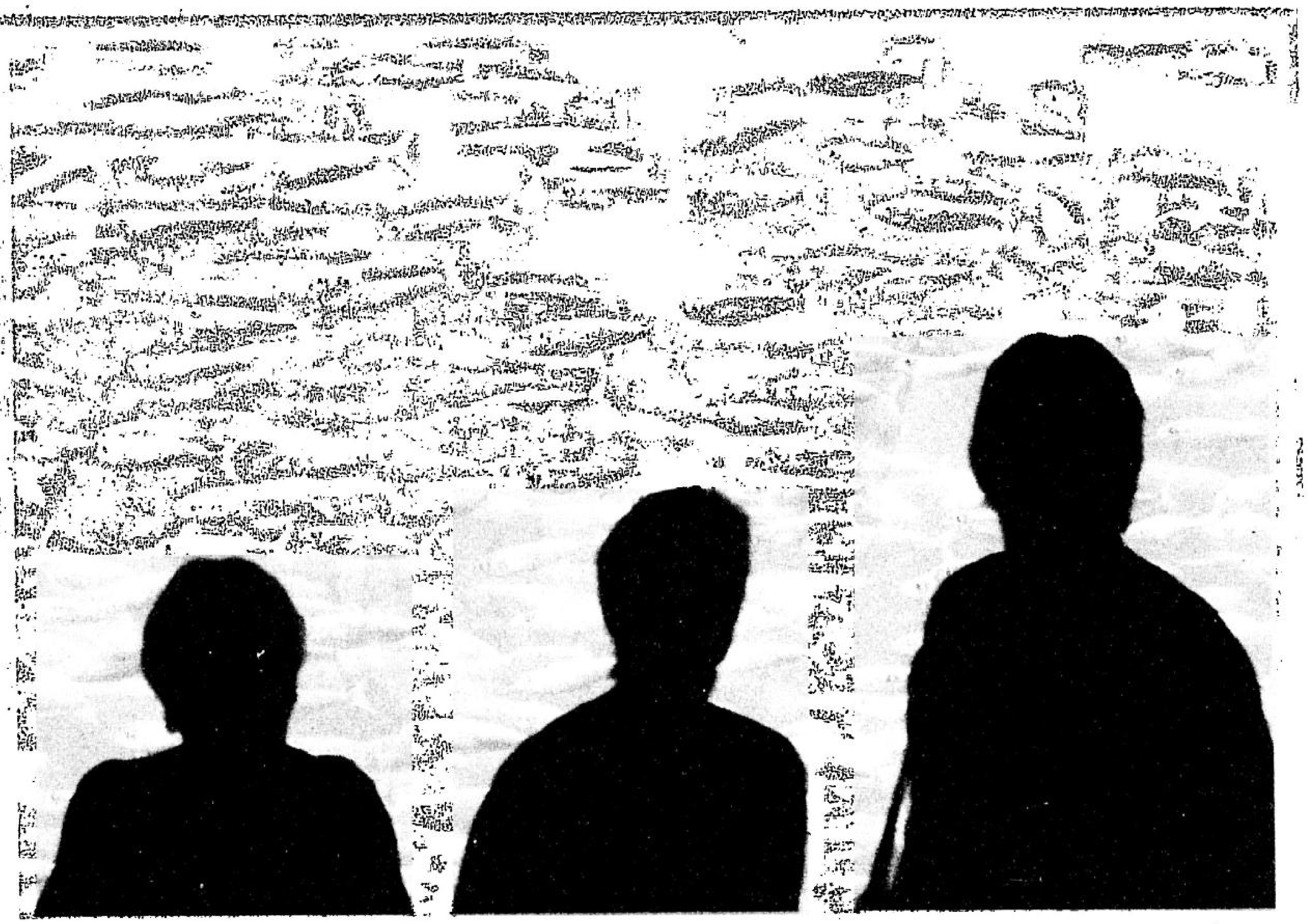
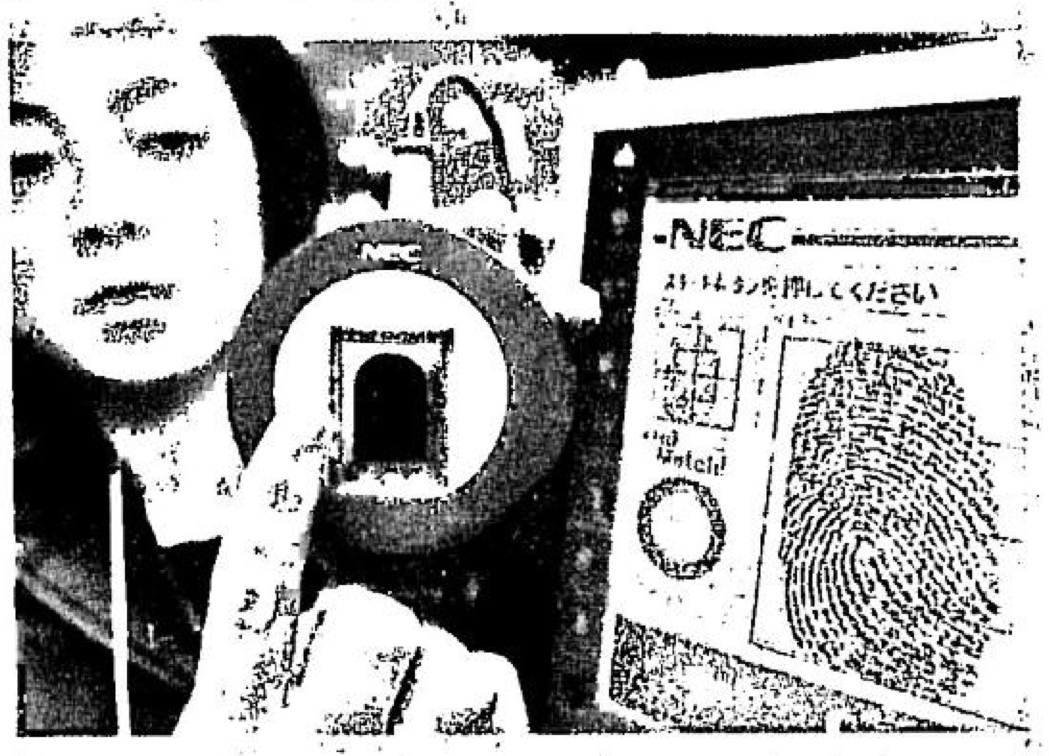
Bangkok, Thailand



The Secret Life of Fish

TOURISTS watch fish in an aquarium at Puerto de la Cruz's nature reserve in Tenerife. The underground aquarium offers the possibility to watch the biodiversity of species belonging to salt and fresh water, from the Amazon to the Canary Islands. *Reuters*



Your Thumb, Your I.D.

JAPAN's electronics giant NEC presents its latest fingerprint verification unit "SecureFinger." It scans a fingerprint with the precision of 800 dots per inch. The gadget went on display at the Security Solution Expo 2002 in Yokohama, suburban Tokyo. *AFP*

It's NAMCYA time again!

HIGH school students dressed in traditional costumes prepare to join a national music competition for young artists at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila. The annual music competition attracted 1,500 participants depicting various songs and dances of tribal communities across the country. *AFP*

A Brave Little Bear

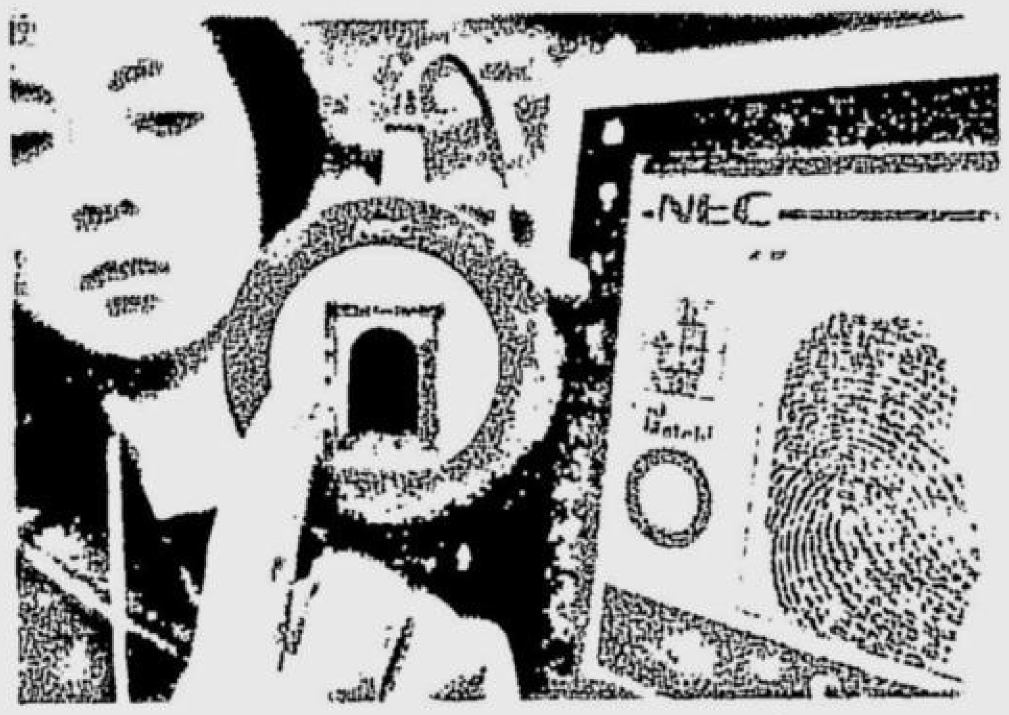
EDWIN, a 5-inch bear is snug in the breast pocket of a Christie's auction official. Edwin, circa 1914, was the companion of British soldier Percy Kynnersley-Baddeley, who lost his life in battle in 1916. Edwin was found by Percy's comrades tucked into his breast pocket and was returned to his wife. Edwin was estimated to fetch around 500 British pounds or P40,000 at the teddy bear auction. *AP*

Only a Mommy could...

RAK Maram, a 36-year-old Thai mahout, or elephant trainer, demonstrates her close relationship with a 2-year-old female elephant named Benjama. She has placed her head in the animal's mouth and kissed its tongue. Rak has worked with Benjama since the baby elephant was born. *Reuters*

World Scope

London, England
Yokohama, Japan
Puerto de la Cruz, Spain
Manila, Philippines
Bangkok, Thailand



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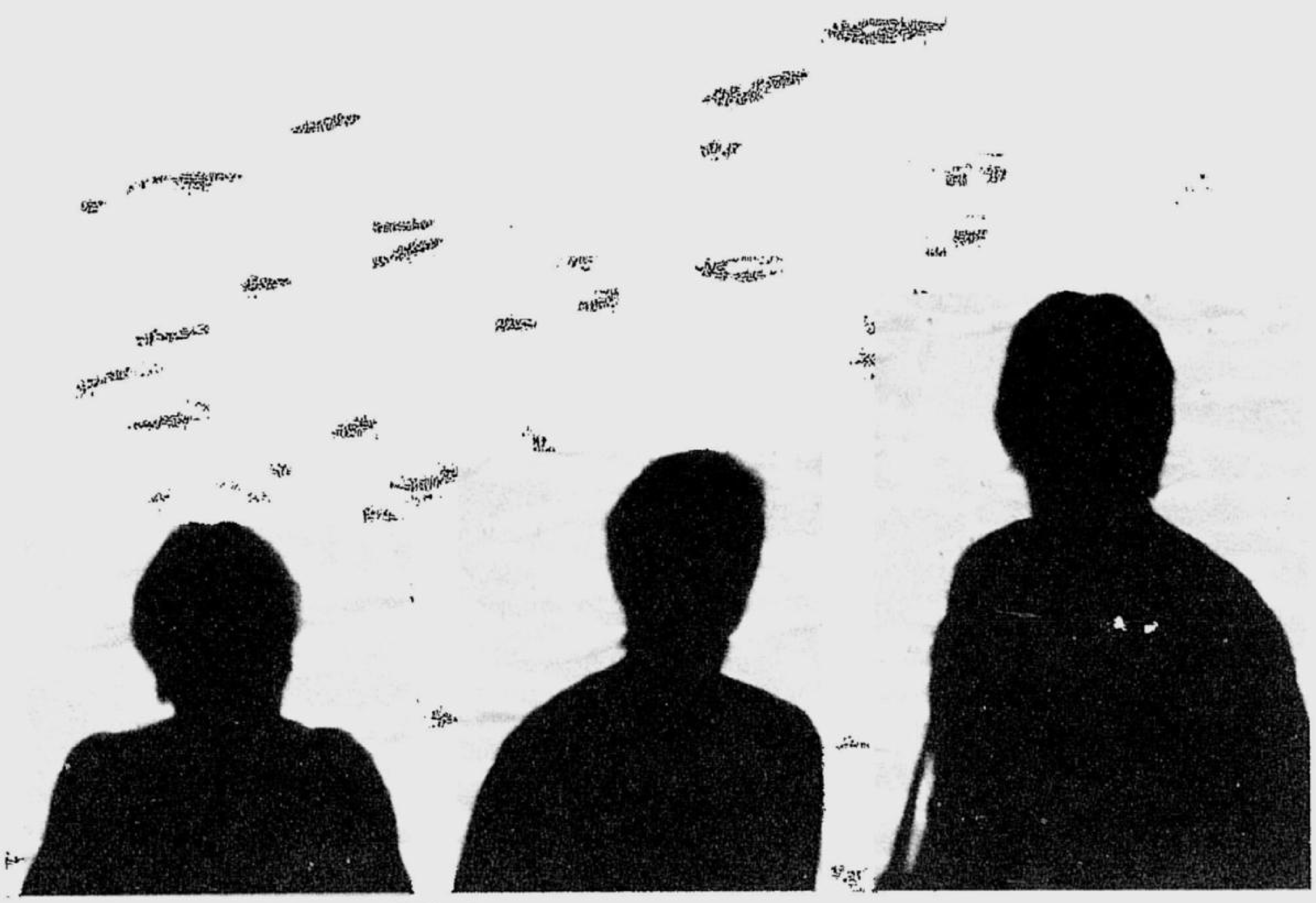

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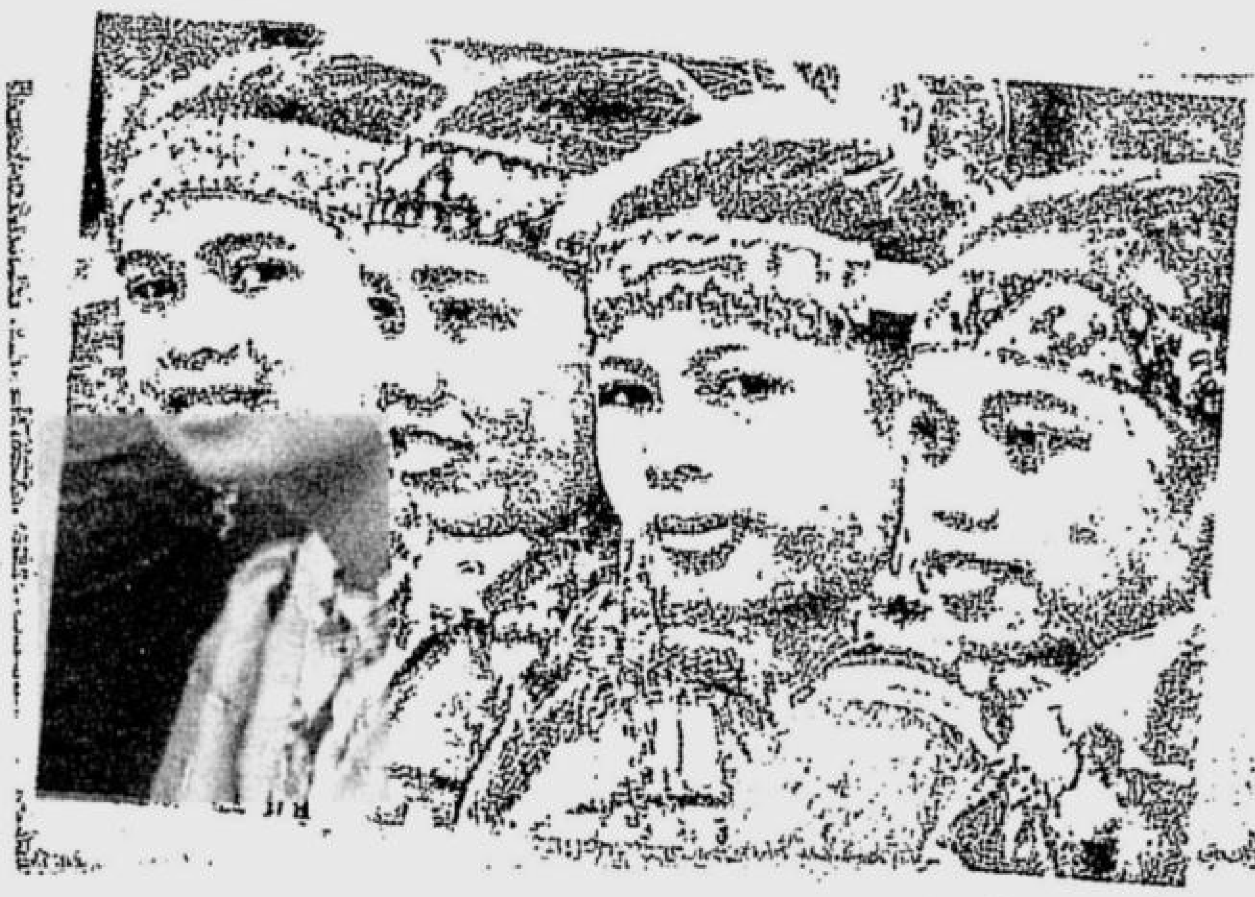

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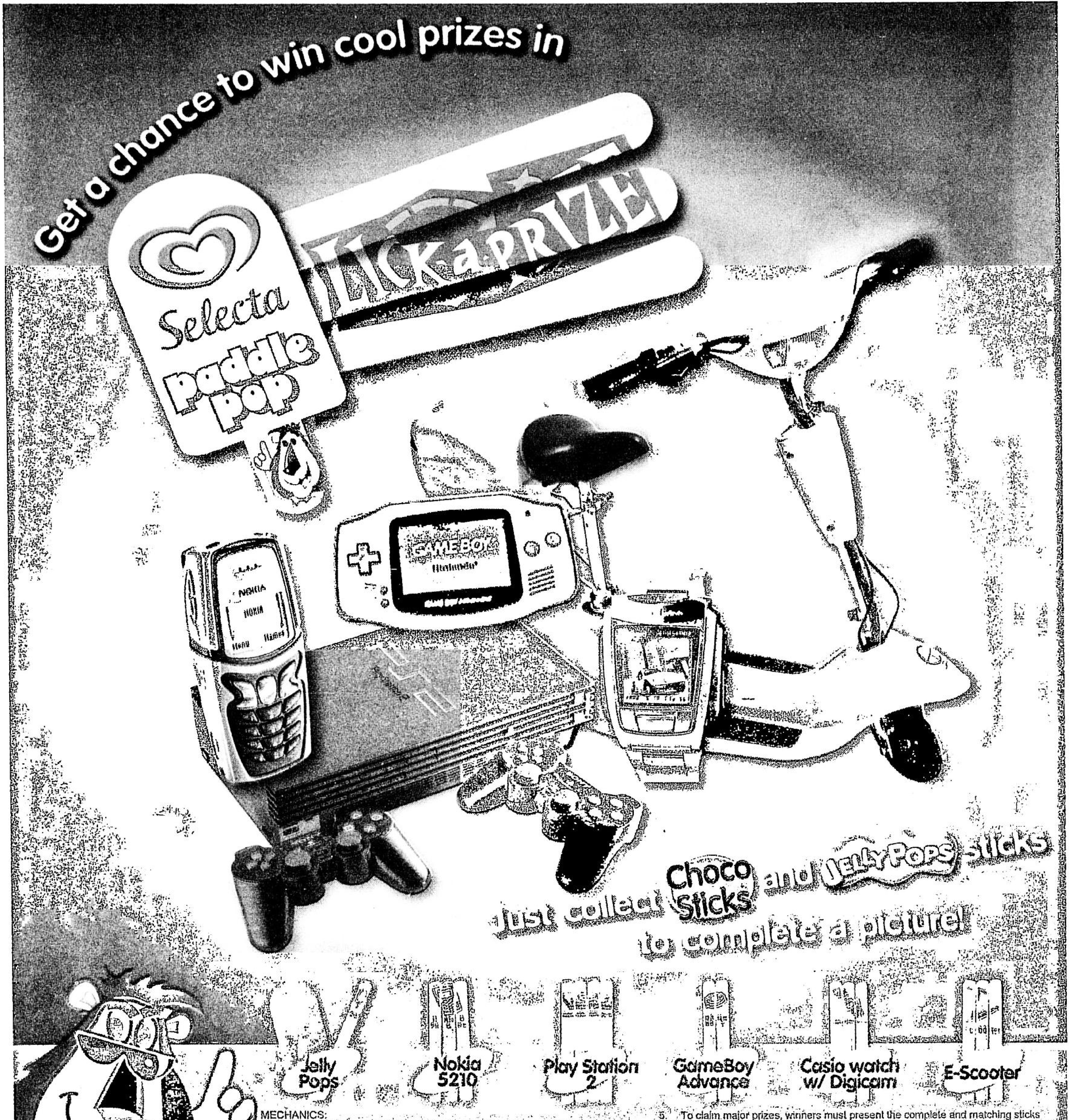
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MECHANICS:

1. For every purchase of Selecta Paddle Pop Chocolate and Paddle Pop Jelly Pops get the chance to win prizes. To win, collect specially marked sticks and match them to form the icon of a corresponding prize.
2. Matching Sticks automatically win the indicated prize (Playstation 2 - 4 sticks, Casio Watch w/ Digicam - 3 sticks, E-Scooter - 3 sticks, Nokia 5210 - 3 sticks, Gameboy Advance - 2 sticks, and Paddle Pop Jelly Pops - 1 stick).
3. Winners of free Paddle Pop Jelly Pops can claim the free products by presenting the winning stick of any participating Selecta Wall's outlets nationwide.
4. GMA winners of the major prizes can claim the prize at the Selecta Wall's main office. Provincial winners can claim the prize at the Selecta Wall's depot in their area. Contact Selecta Wall's Trade Marketing Department at 645-5041 local 8409 for more information.
5. To claim major prizes, winners must present the complete and matching sticks forming the icon of the corresponding prize to an authorized Selecta Wall's employee from the main office or depots.
6. Only genuine and original sticks shall be honored for redemption of prizes. All the seeded sticks of major prizes are printed with special marks which will be used by Selecta Wall's for authentication purposes.
7. All prizes are not convertible to cash.
8. Employees of Selecta Wall's Inc., its agencies, the DOH-BFAD, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity are disqualified from the promo.
9. Promo period is from October 28, 2002 to December 31, 2002. Free Paddle Pop Jelly Pops should be claimed within the promo period. Major prizes not claimed after sixty (60) days from the last day of the promo (March 2, 2002) will be forfeited.

Claim your free Jelly Pops in selected stores with Lick-a-Prize banners!

Ref DOH-BFAD Permit No. 1006 Series of 2002

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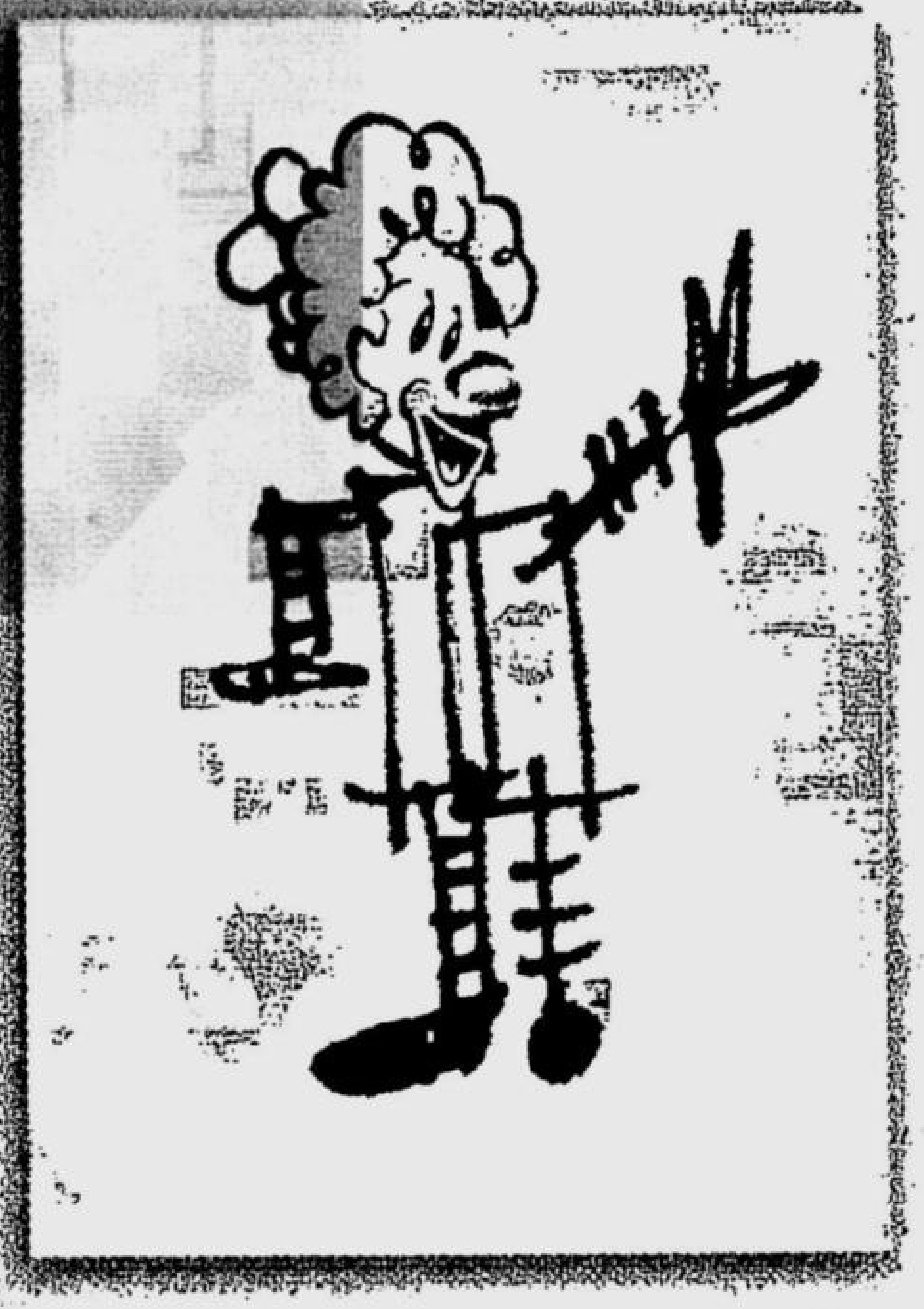
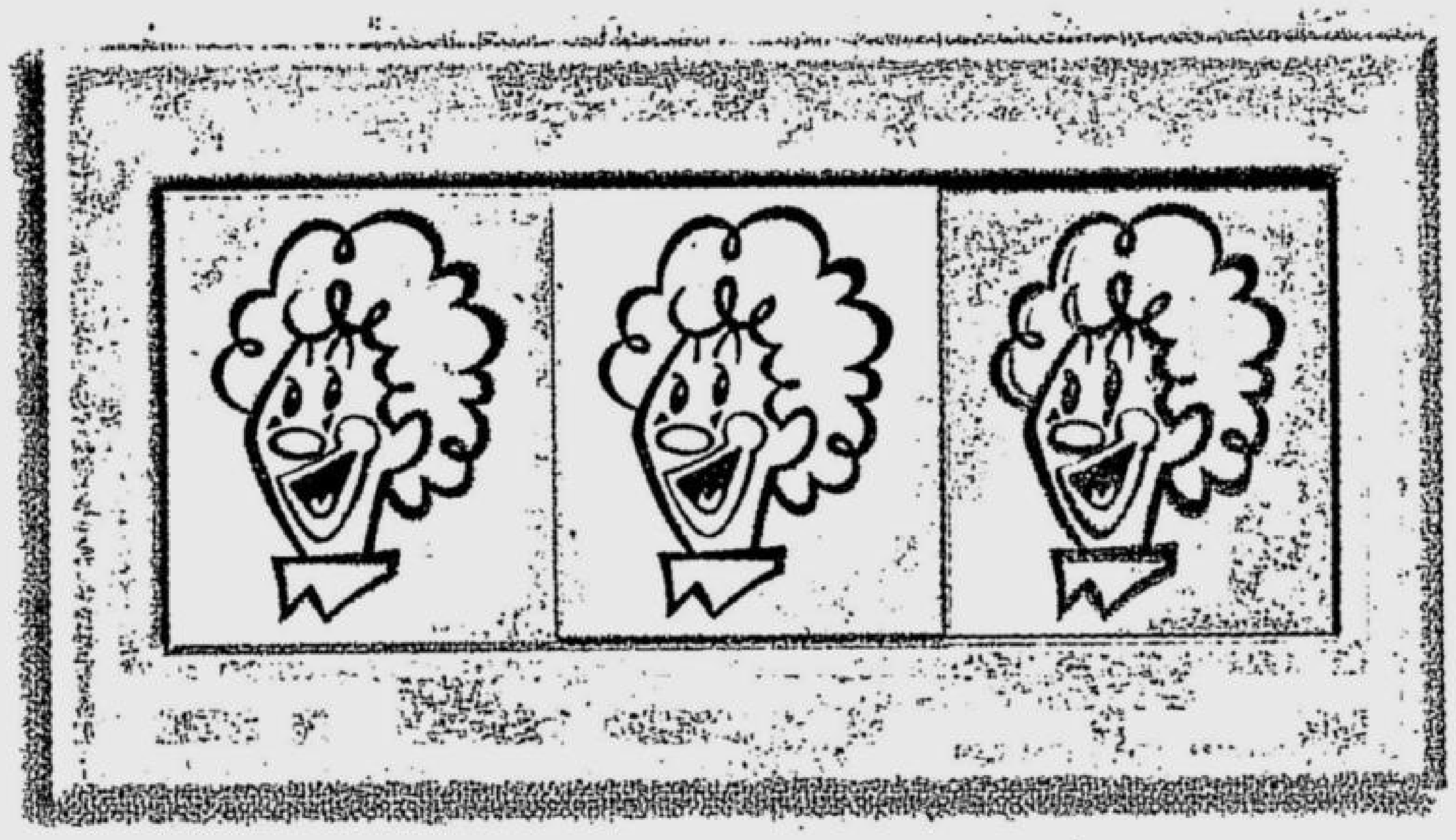
How Pablo and Andy see Ronald.





How do you see him?

Draw Ronald, your magical pal, and you could win a prize!

- Contest is open to kids aged 5-10, male or female, living in Metro Manila.
- Draw Ronald on the space above. Use watercolor, crayons...anything!
- Fill up the entry form and submit this entire page to any McDonald's restaurant in Metro Manila.
- Twenty (20) entries will be chosen. The 20 artists qualify to join a free art workshop and On-The-Spot art contest at a later date (date & venue to be announced).
- Five (5) of the best artworks will be chosen as winners. Each will get ₱10.000 and have the artwork displayed in a McDonald's restaurant or Bahay Bulilit Daycare Center.
- Entries will be judged according to the following criteria:

Thematic Rendition	40%
Creativity	40%
Overall Impact	20%

- Deadline for submission is on 7 December 2002.

Entry Form

Name: ______

Age ______

Address: ______

______

Tel #: ______

Email ______

Kita-kits sa McDo

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Assignment: FUN!

(from page 1)

To all kids, Look
how fun our Jail is!
You are free to
come in but pay
to come out!
Enjoy!

TOP: EITHER do the time (30 minutes) or post bail (P20) at the jail booth. **RIGHT:** La Salle Greenhills' Ahmed Bouhashi, Grade 4, talks about his drawing with JI Staff Writer Eline Santos. Around 15 kids joined the school's book cover design contest. **FAR RIGHT:** Sixth graders Ernest Parilla and Darwin Marquez are trapped in the Mr. and Ms Fair booth.

BETOY JOHNSON

contest. Students competed to finish their respective book-cover puzzle first.

EJ's edge was puzzle-solving at home. "My dad usually buys me puzzles. He times me. If I break his time, I get a prize or something."

The Potter Puzzle

The biggest jigsaw puzzle EJ ever solved was "the Harry Potter puzzle my dad gave me... it's about a hundred pieces. It took me two days to solve."

His worthy opponents included schoolmates Miguel Martinez, Patrick Tiongson and Deric Dario.

The similarity in puzzle pieces proved to be the challenge. Despite that, Patrick said "The puzzle contest was interesting." Good sportsmen, Deric and Miguel also said there were no hard feelings.

Other Stuff

Other activities included celebrity storytelling with Ciara Sotto and Ronald McDonald, magic shows, film showings, Clifford drawing contest, book cover design contest, poster making and essay writing contest. Both schools culminated their week-long activity with a family fun day on Nov. 23.

Thinkathon
BY SONIA ... AMOJA

CAPITAL SPELLER

IN each number, the passport to success is to pick the capital city's correct spelling (the latest English rendering, that is)—or you run the risk of being declared *persona non grata* there. Just kidding—but a fine score should qualify you as a world ambassador-at-large. Here's more: Score an extra point if you can tell the country where each capital is located.

1. • Buenas Aires • Buenos Aires
2. • Brussels • Brussells
3. • Sarajevo • Saravejo
4. • Phnom Penh • Phnom Pehn
5. ○ Otawa • Ottawa
6. • Adidas Ababa • Addis Ababa
7. • Reykjavik • Rejkyavik
8. • Bahgdad • Baghdad
9. • Pyongyang • Pyonngjang
10. • Stockhelm • Stockholm
11. • Columbo • Colombo
12. • Luxemburg • Luxembourg

Answers:

1. Buenos Aires (Argentina)
2. Brussels (Belgium)
3. Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
4. Phnom Penh (Cambodia)
5. Ottawa (Canada)
6. Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)
7. Reykjavik (Iceland)
8. Baghdad (Iraq)
9. Pyongyang (North Korea)
10. Stockholm (Sweden)
11. Colombo (Sri Lanka)
12. Luxembourg (Luxembourg)

Ratings:

superbrain!
20-24

excellent!
15-19

good!
10-14

Flying and Dining

By Nico Miguel N. Garcia
Paref- Southridge School

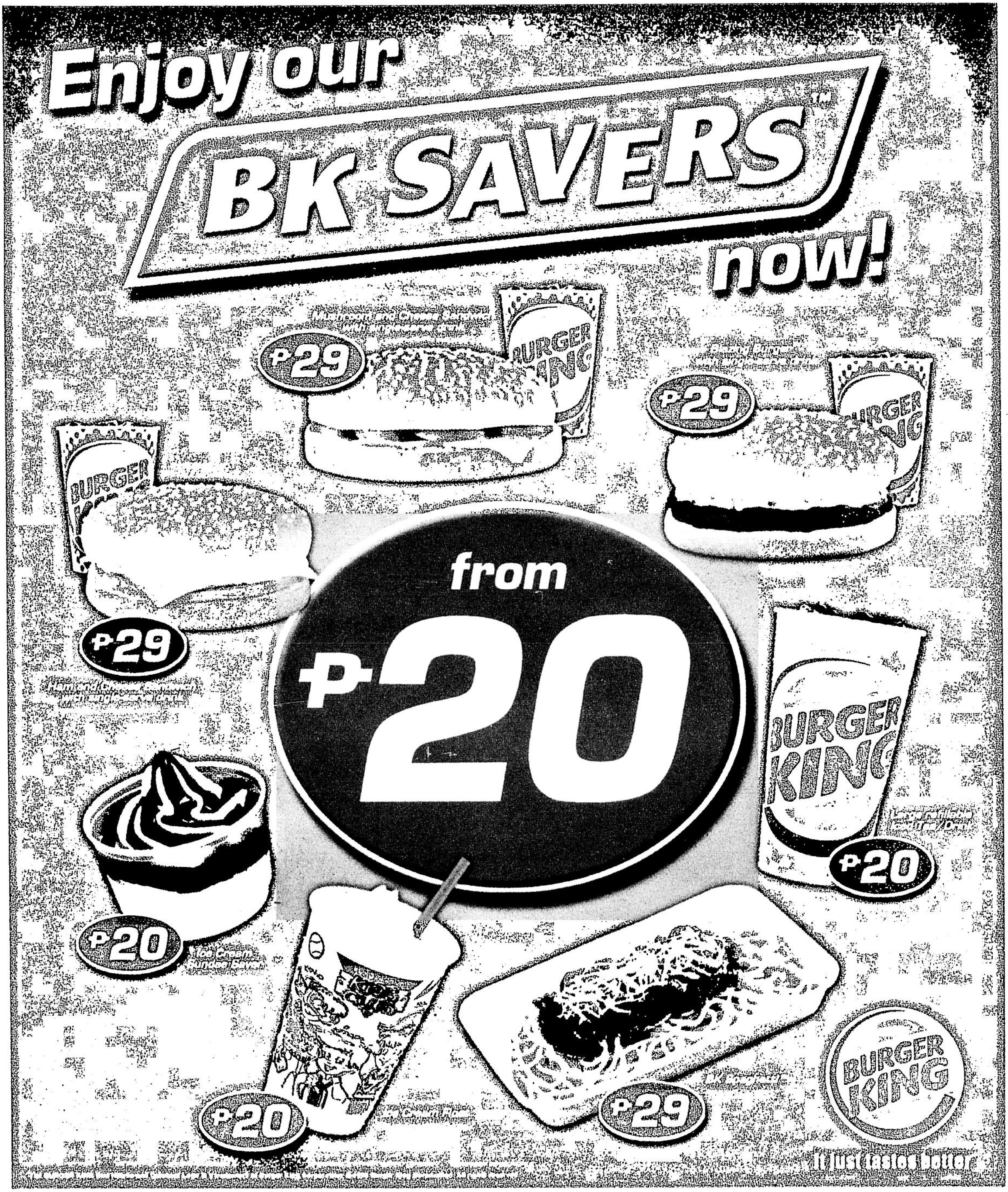
...ON the ground. It was Saturday, 9th of November, when the Young Explorer's Club had a Food Taste Testing Party sponsored by Singapore Airlines. Every four months, Singapore Airlines gives different kinds of meals to their young passengers who are at the ages of 2-12 years old. Those who have at least joined once as a young passenger of Singapore Airlines are already members of the Young Explorer's Club. During the food tasting, the members were to taste and eat every delightful meal which were supposed to be served to young passengers flying from Manila to Singapore on these four months. That testing was done in the Parañaque Function Room of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

A Winnie the Pooh mascot was there to entertain the little club members as they couldn't wait to eat. Food samples were on a table and their names posted below them. There were over twenty samples there which would make your mouth drool just by looking at them. When lunchtime came, Tita Rita introduced that their VIP's, which were the club members, should thank their station manager, Mr. Chew Yun Mong. Tita Jac, then, introduced the meals and they started choosing.

They went to the center table, many on their toes, to choose which ones they would try. The chosen foods were prepared for the children by the cooking of the genius hands of Chefs Rudy Libero, Meliton Abcede, Emmanuel L. Policarpio, Roy Ng, and Eliseo C. Go of Macro Asia-Eurest catering services. The kids ate their fine choices with purified water, orangee fruit drinks, and butter from the Singapore Airlines. With the fresh and great baked macaroni, beef hamburger patty, chocolate mousse, fish fingers, chicken nuggets, fruit cocktails, scrambled eggs and peach tarts, the whole festivity and test was a food heaven. The beef was powerful in taste, fresh fruits had so much good nutrition, the pastries and desserts were well-balanced. There would just not be enough since every meal had its own special taste. The Singapore Airlines have had good meals before and they've just had really great ones now.

That day was not just a dine in the sky, but a dine in the heavens. One word would explain the whole test's result... DELICIOUS!!!

MORE, please! Sandro is there something funny in your meal?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₱20
₱20
Ice Cream Sundae
₱20
₱29
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SURPRIS'EMOTO

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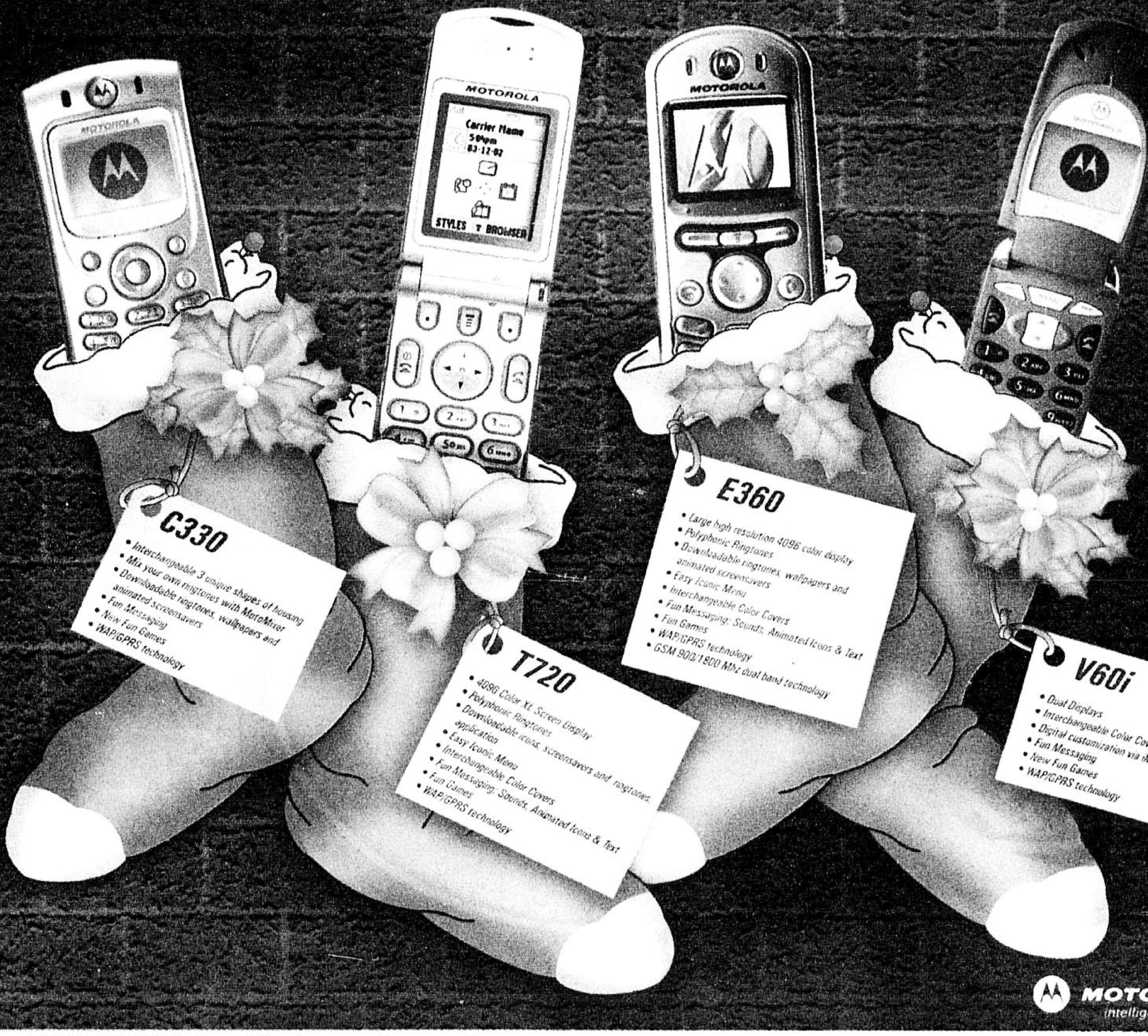

C330
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- Mix your own ringtones with MotoMixer
- Downloadable ringtones, wallpapers and animated screensavers
- Fun Messaging
- New Fun Games
- WAP/GPRS technology

T720
- 4096 Color XL Screen Display
- Polyphonic Ringtones
- Downloadable icons, screensavers and ringtones application
- Easy Iconic Menu
- Interchangeable Color Covers
- Fun Messaging: Sounds, Animated Icons & Text
- Fun Games
- WAP/GPRS technology

E360
- Large high resolution 4096 color display
- Polyphonic Ringtones
- Downloadable ringtones, wallpapers and animated screensavers
- Easy Iconic Menu
- Interchangeable Color Covers
- Fun Messaging: Sounds, Animated Icons & Text
- Fun Games
- WAP/GPRS technology
- GSM 900/1800 Mhz dual band technology

V60i
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Happy
Bonifacio Day!

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Junior INQUIRER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2002 ✦ 12 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 7, NUMBER 9

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

- **Bowlingual** Page 2
- **The Christmas Spirit** Page 5
- **Story: A Gathering of Three Great Men** Page 6
- **Shirley's Pets** Page 12

Here's to Andres!

Andres Bonifacio was a true Pinoy hero. He was a terrific kid, too.

By Eline Santos

IT'S Bonifacio Day! Time to celebrate the courageous life of one of our favorite heroes, Andres Bonifacio.

Andres Bonifacio was born on Nov. 30, 1863 or 139 years ago in Tondo, Manila. His parents were Santiago Bonifacio and Catalina de Castro. Andres was the oldest of six siblings: Ciriaco, Procopio, Espiridiona, Troadio and Maxima.

Andres Bonifacio is best known for his role in the Katipunan. As one of the founders, he became its "Supremo" and led the revolution against Spain in 1896.

Andres' Descendant

But have you ever wondered what the great Supremo was like as a kid?

Gregorio "Gary" Bonifacio, one of the great great grandnephews of Andres Bonifacio himself, shares that, "during Bonifacio's childhood, Bonifacio would frequently bathe around a lighthouse along the Pasig River, together with his cousins. Sometimes he would invite his friends from Tondo to the fiestas in Pasig and Antipolo."

"Everytime Pasig had its fiesta, the Bonifacios would be there," Gary narrates. "They would have picnics, go swimming."

Gary says their games were *sepang takraw* (a form of *sipa* played with a ball woven from bamboo), *piko*, and *patintero*. "Maybe he even got into fights," he speculates.

As for his education, Andres learned the Caton or Spanish alphabet from his mom. He was later tutored by Guillermo Osmeña.

A Barkada of Heroes-to-be

Andres was already very good friends with Emilio Jacinto, who in their adult years would be considered the brains of the Katipunan.

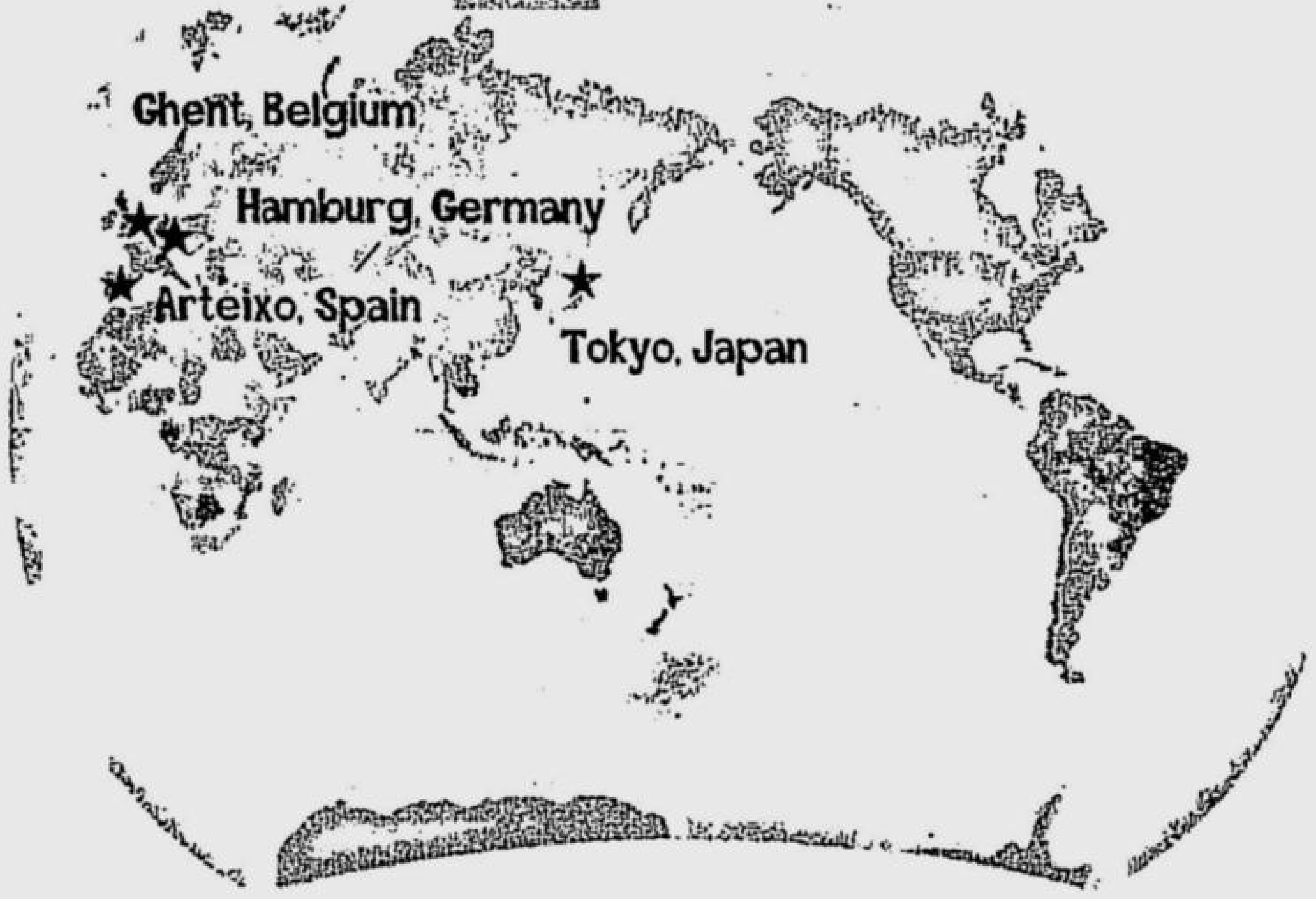
"There was a time when the mother of Emilio Jacinto breastfed Espiridiona, Bonifacio's sister, because Catalina had no milk," says Gary. "That's how close their families were. Bonifacio and Jacinto were really childhood friends."

Andres put up his own theater group, the Teatro Porvenir. "Most of their stage plays were about Bernardo Carpio. Carpio was his favorite character."

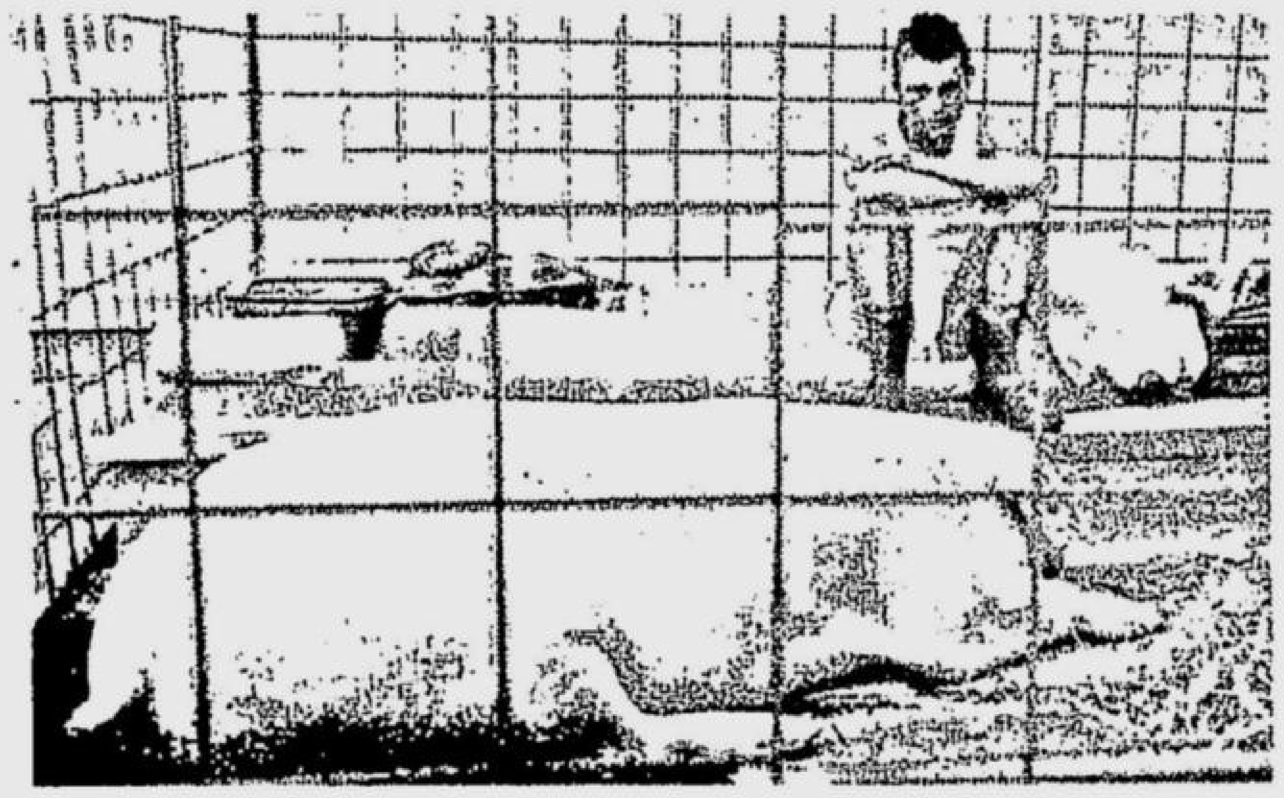
Here's to Andres!/ p. 3

GARY B. is proud to be Bonifacio' s descendant. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

World Scope



A Boar's Life



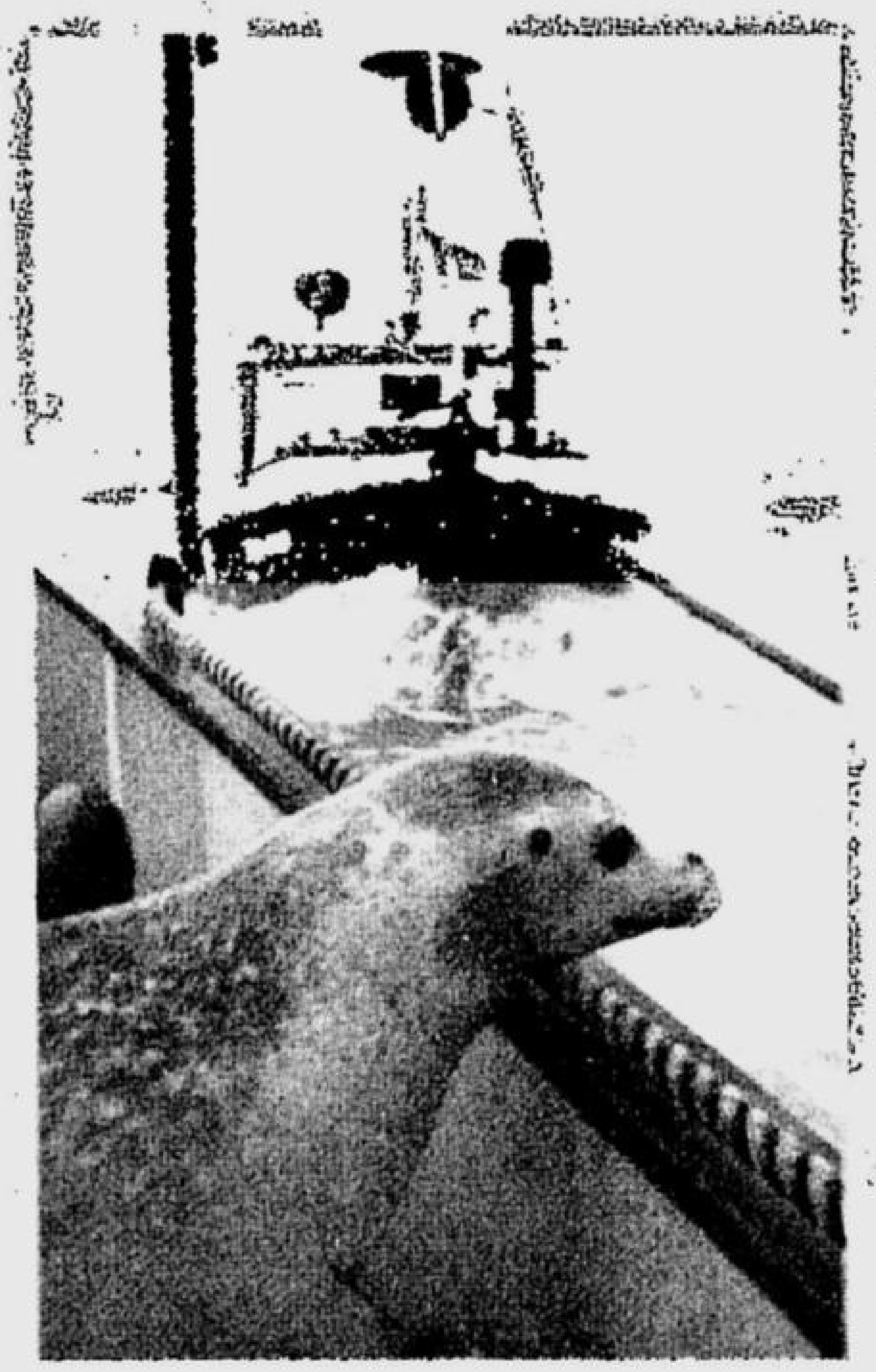
BELGIAN actor Benjamin Verdonck shares an iron cage with a pig in Ghent early November. His 3-day stay in the cage was in protest against the rising tensions between the US and Iraq. Verdonck's protest is inspired by another artist who spent a week in a cage with a coyote in an art gallery in 1974.

Reuters

Poor Bird!

An unidentified man holds a bird covered with oil in Arteixo, northwestern Spain, after oil spilled from the Bahamas-flagged tanker "Prestige" washed ashore. The tanker, that is in danger of splitting in two, has been towed out to sea to avoid an environmental catastrophe.

AP



Going Home

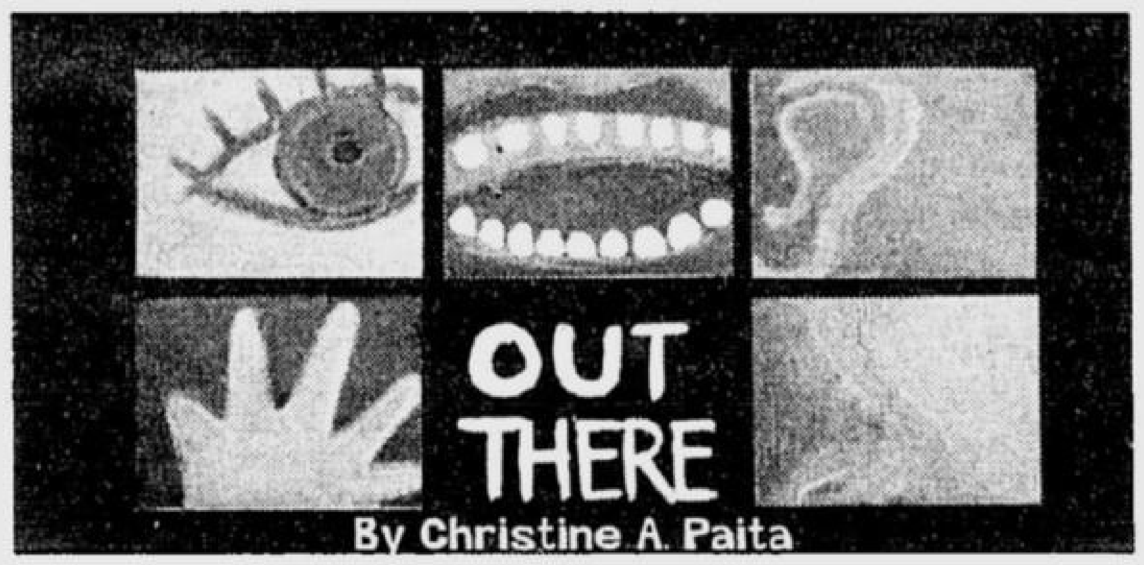
A YOUNG seal waits to be returned to the North Sea aboard a ship coming from Hamburg. Due to a virus killing more than 3,600 seals in the German state of Schleswig-Holstein, the young animals left the seals station two months later than usual.

AFP

Read this: I don't like cats!

DOGS' best friends in Japan had a new gadget to check out when "Bowlingual" finally went on sale in Tokyo a few weeks ago. The gadget consists of a small microphone attached to a dog's collar and handheld device that deciphers dogs' growls and yelps into six feelings: frustration, alarm, self-expression, happiness, sadness and desire. And on the small monitor pops up any one of 200 phrases, such as "Oh, no," "I can't stand it," and "How boring!" Bowlingual is pricey though. It fetches 14,800 yen in Japan. That's more than P6,000! You and doggie don't need a Bowlingual to agree that a large bone is a much better purchase.

AP



Got something for Out There? Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax numbers are 897-4793 up to 94. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

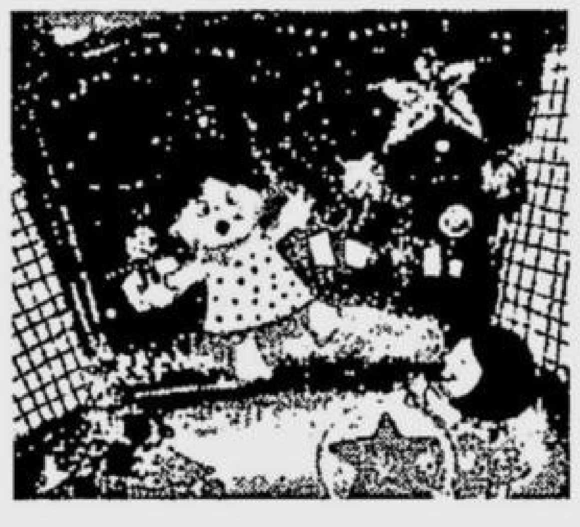
Activities

TWIST THOSE BALLOONS! Come to the **Starmall Food Court** in Mandaluyong City on Nov. 30 for a fun-filled afternoon of balloon twisting. Find out just how good you can be at twisting those balloons into all kinds of shapes and objects! The activity starts at 3 p.m.

DONATE A BOOK. Share the fun experience of reading. Give books to Museo Pambata's **Mobile Library's Book Drive**! Donate old encyclopedia sets, textbooks, storybooks, dictionaries, magazines and other reading materials. For more info, please call Noreen at 523-1797 to 98. Or e-mail pr-prog@museopambata.org.

Stuff

CHRISTMAS CARDS. Send Christmas cheers by way of colorful **Christmas cards by Museo Pambata.** Choose from its 1998-2001 collection of designs by acclaimed artists and book illustrators. All-occasion cards by the **Blanco family of artists** are also available at discounted prices. Each card you buy helps fund the Mobile Library Program of Museo Pambata. The cards can be purchased at the Museo Pambata Giftshop on Roxas Blvd. corner South Drive, Manila. Visit them online at www.museopambata.org. To order, call Anna at 523-1797 to 98 or e-mail mrktng@museopambata.org.



"PAGSABIT ng Parol" card by artist Jo Ann Bereber

Contest

CHRISTMAS CARD. Join KidsActs Philippines Christmas card drawing contest. Artists 14 years old and below can join. The theme is: **"Give Love on Christmas Day!"** Use any medium on an 8.5 x 11-inch white drawing paper or cardboard. You can submit as many as 3 designs. Send them to KidsActs Philippines, No. 15 Sunrise St., La Paz Village, Makati City not later than Dec. 9, 6 p.m. For more info, please call 896-7656 (Eugene), 0919-413-2282 (Luigi), or e-mail kids_acts@hotmail.com.

Workshop

MAKE A PAROL! Check out Outlet Yard's **Christmas Lantern-making** workshop on Dec. 8. Registration fee is P150 per session/per student. For more info, call 740-7221. Outlet Yard is located at 1480 Quezon Ave., Quezon City.

Theater

KALIKASAN. Come and watch "Kalikasan," a play that aims to awaken the audience to **campaign for the preservation of the environment.** It will be staged on all Saturdays of December at the Briefing Area of the Philippine Science Centrum, UP Manila Compound, Pedro Gil St. corner Taft Ave., Ermita, Manila. For inquiries, contact Rissa (0920-2851154) or Des (0918-936-0687) at 525-8752, 536-3092 or telefax no. 525-8418.

Here's to Andres!

(from page 1)

"The theater is where they became friends with Macario Sakay," Gary relates. Macario Sakay grew up to lead patriotic Filipinos to resist American rule even after everyone else had given up.

At the age of 10, Andres was orphaned. His mother had died of tuberculosis. His father followed a year later. "Andres became self-supporting," says Gary.

Working, working, working

Andres made paper fans and walking canes, a trade he learned from his father. "When their house in Tondo burned down, their uncle in Tayuman took them in."

"He took on many jobs," says Gary. "He became a *bodeguero*, which at that time meant someone watching over the warehouse." Andres had beautiful penmanship which he used to make posters for business firms. He worked as a clerk-messenger for Fleming and Company, and later worked as an agent at Fressell and Company.

"While he worked, he read books. If their house in Tutuban didn't burn down, maybe the books there would have been preserved. Bonifacio had his own library."

Misconceptions

"He was artistic and creative," Gary describes. Andres used to make his own clothes. "When he had time, he would ask his uncle-tailor for a label and sew it onto his clothes."

"He didn't really wear the *camiso de tsina*."

Also, Andres wore a military uniform to battle and brought a gun instead of the stereotyped bolo. "The one who gave him a gun was Pio Valenzuela."

Gary points out that Andres was a member of the La Liga Filipina. "He wanted propaganda before revolution. Before he launched the revolution, he first tried the peaceful way."

Gary describes his great great granduncle as the serious type who took care of his responsibilities, was fair-minded, and had his own charisma.

Bonifacio Legacy

Gary works as a lawyer and has recently put up his own private practice. He has a deep sense of history and takes his heritage very seriously.

"When people learn you're a descendant of Andres Bonifacio, the trust is immediately there."

Which is why Gary strives to be honest in everything.

"It doesn't matter if we go through hard times, just as long as the Bonifacio name remains honorable."

You don't need a revolution to be a hero. Being responsible is one Bonifacio trait Gary is proud of... a trait he urges kids to apply.

"There are those who want to study but can't because they lack money, which is what happened to Bonifacio. He wasn't able to finish his studies because there was no one there to help them." Gary encourages the next generation to work hard and persevere. "Study hard, don't waste the opportunity."

Maybe that's the beginning of present-day heroes and heroines.

Seas and Snot

Iggy Ipis
BOOK REVIEWS

HEY, kids! Do you like the sea? Isn't it great to go to the beach during the break and swim with fishes and look at corals? You might think that there must be a magical world out there in the sea.

In the new book I read entitled **"Anina ng mga Alon,"** you will meet a really special girl named Anina who knows a lot about the sea. That's because she spent most of her life in it.

In Tawi-tawi, there is a group known as the Badjaos. They are sea dwellers. They live in houseboats called *lepa* and make their living through fishing. Anina is one of them. She sings songs to the waves. Giant turtles and seashells are her playmates. The sea breeze rocks their *lepa* softly as she sleeps and dreams. And one of Anina's dreams is to be able to go school.

You see, life can be very difficult for the Badjaos. There are times when they can't catch enough fish. There are times when they lose someone in an accident in the sea. There are also pirates to worry about.

Sometimes, they are forced to leave the sea and go to cities like Manila to find work.

Laugh and cry with Anina as she journeys through numerous changes in her life as she grows up. You will discover the rich culture of the Badjaos. Listen to music of the *kulintangan* and *agungs* and learn some new and beautiful words from our language.

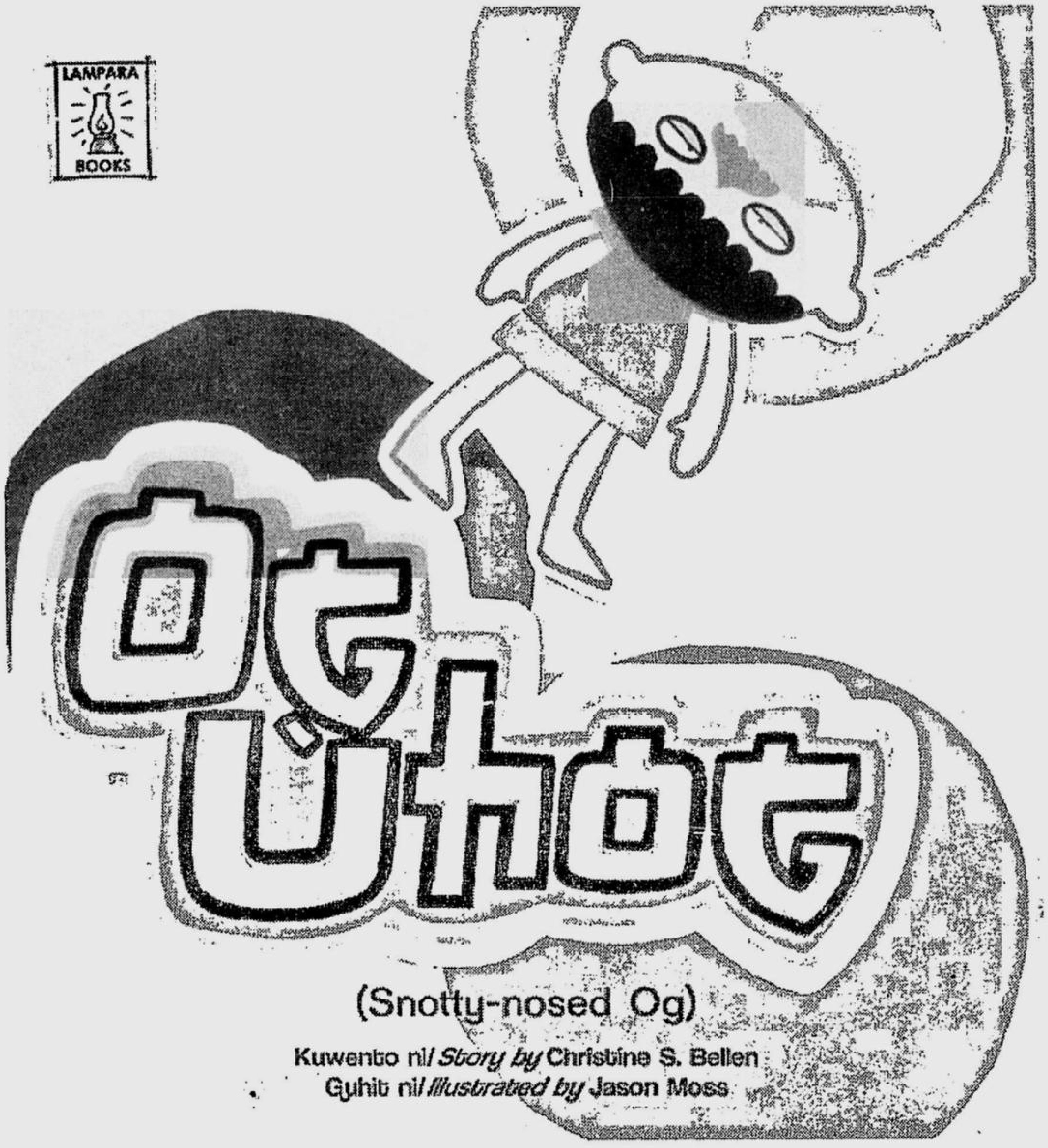
"Anina ng mga Alon" was written by Eugene Y. Evasco and was published by Adarna House. It won the grand prize for this year's Pilar Perez Medallion for Young Adult Literature.

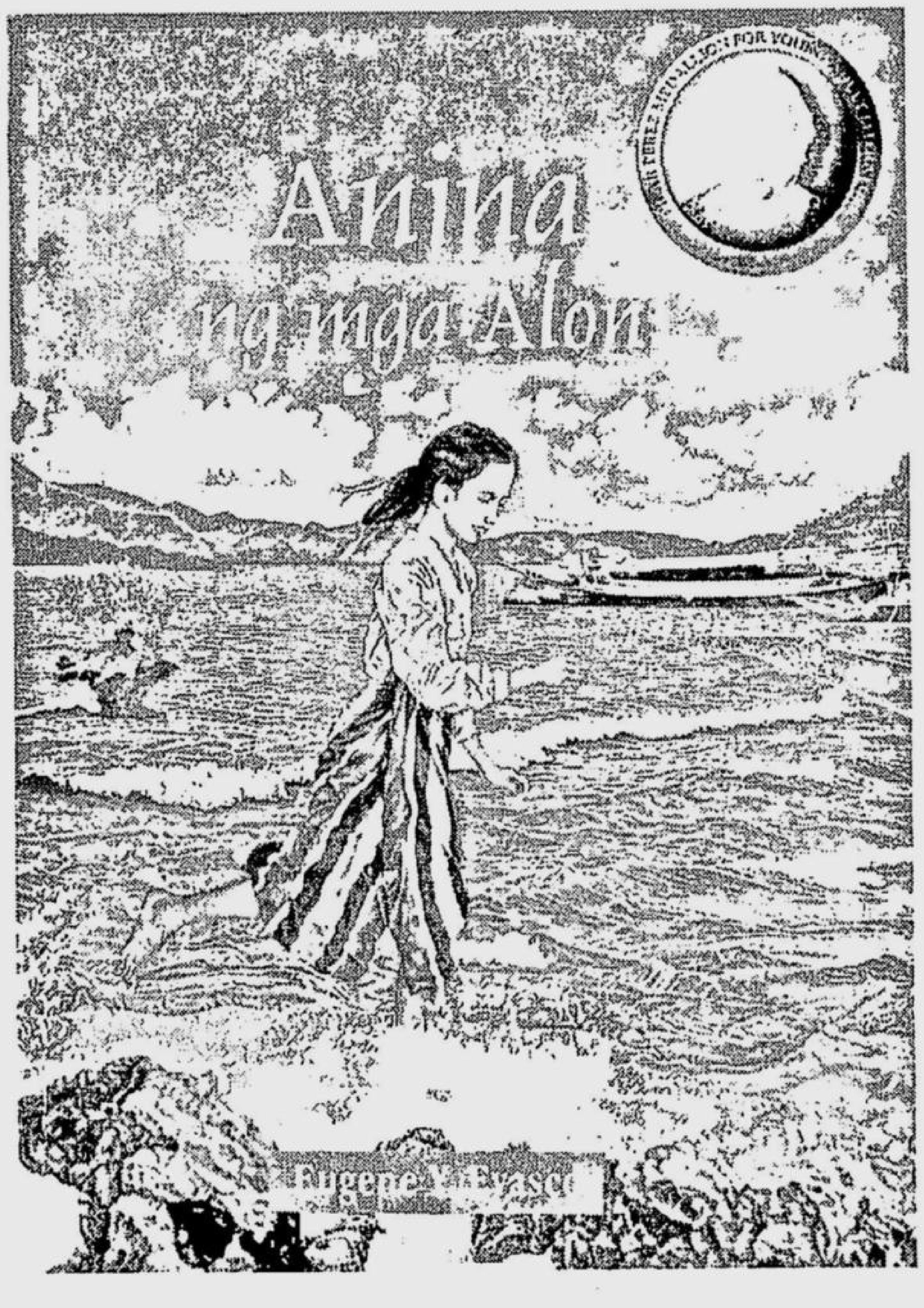
Do you know what snot is for? It's one of our bodies' defenses against virus and bacteria. Can you guess what happens when you have a little too much of it?

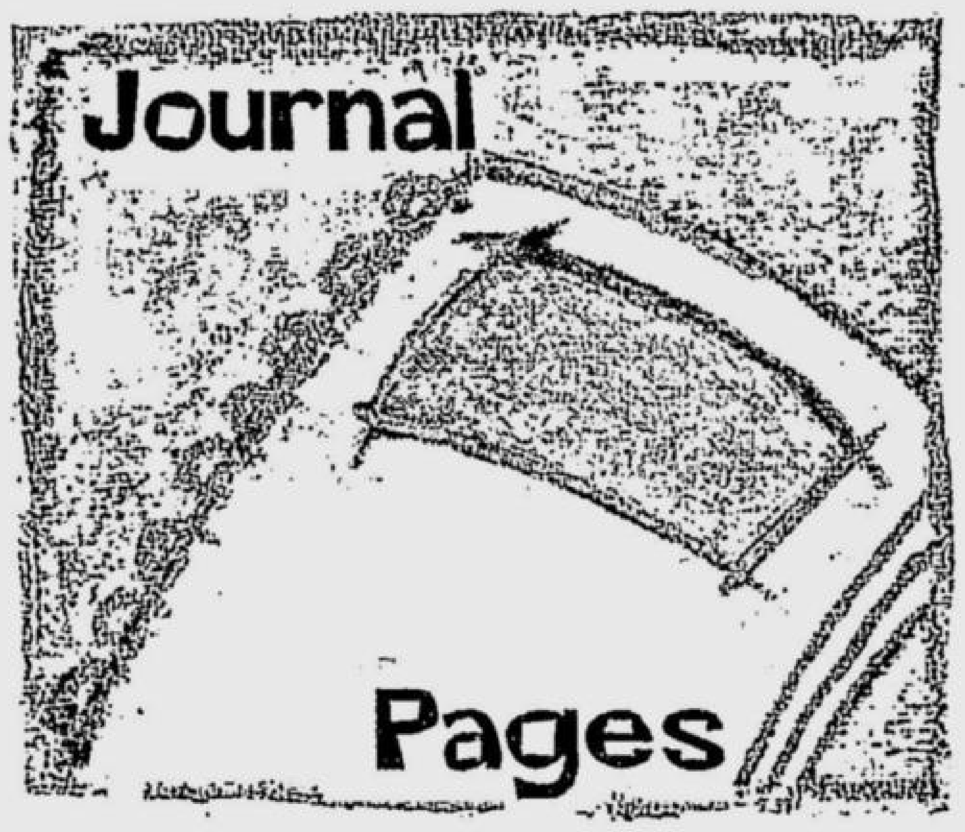
You might get into a sticky situation like Og in Lampara Books' **"Og Uhog."** You see, Og has quite a gross habit. His snot dribbles down his nose up and down like a yoyo. He simply refuses to blow his nose. He would rather watch his favorite anime than clean his snot. What happens now when he goes to school and meet other kids? Will he remember his mother's advice to keep his nose clean?

This humorous tale by Christine Bellen tackles not only this common habit among young children but also the importance of proper hygiene. Jason Moss' fun and whimsical illustrations lets you enjoy Og's adventures without getting disgusted.

Both books are available in all National Bookstore branches nationwide.


LAMPARA BOOKS
Og Uhog
(Snotty-nosed Og)
Kuwento ni/ Story by Christine S. Bellen
Guhit ni/ Illustrated by Jason Moss





The Spirit of Christmas

By Jerick Parrone
Angelicum College
Quezon City

'TWAS the night before Christmas last year. Together with my Daddy, Mommy and two sisters, I sleepily got into the car to start on an evening ride to Lucena City, like we always do each year. We were going to spend Christmas Day at my grandparents' home.

December is a cold month. At night, the wind is even colder. But the Christmas lights are nice to watch. As we traveled I gazed at beautiful decors in homes along the way. Sometimes we heard late-night carolers. We could not sleep because we were excited to be with my Lolo, Lola and Titas. One of my aunts from the USA was home for her Christmas vacation.

When we arrived, we were just in time for Noche Buena. It was delicious! Lola prepared our favorite spaghetti and fried chicken. Later, my little sister Janine sang a Christmas song for everyone.

Then came the gift opening "ceremony." I received a Nike watch and a prayer book. My sisters played with their new toys while I slept. We slept in the cozy bed in the loft.

The following morning, Christmas Day, I changed into my new shirt to attend mass at the Lucena Cathedral. There were so many people that we were not able to enter the church.

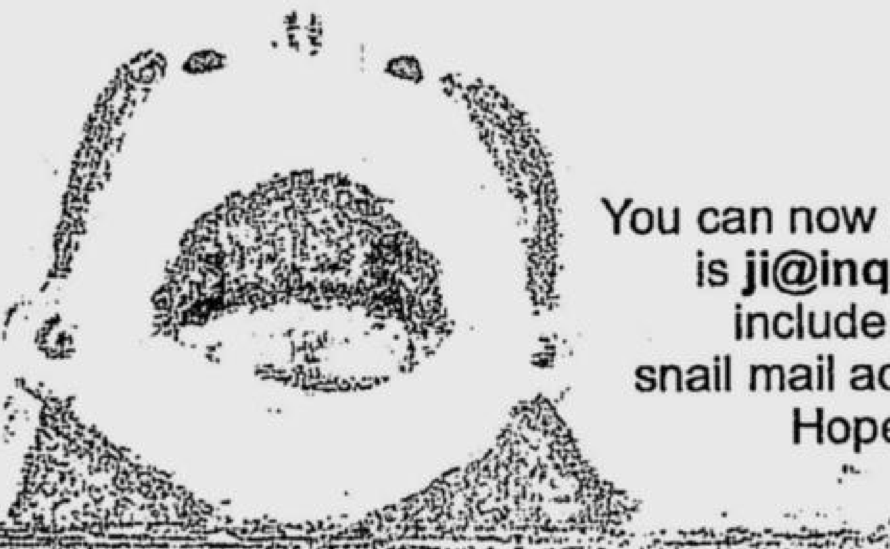
When we got home, we prepared for another important activity. Together with my sisters and some old playmates, we went from house to house and to the homes of our ninongs and

The Spirit/ p. 11

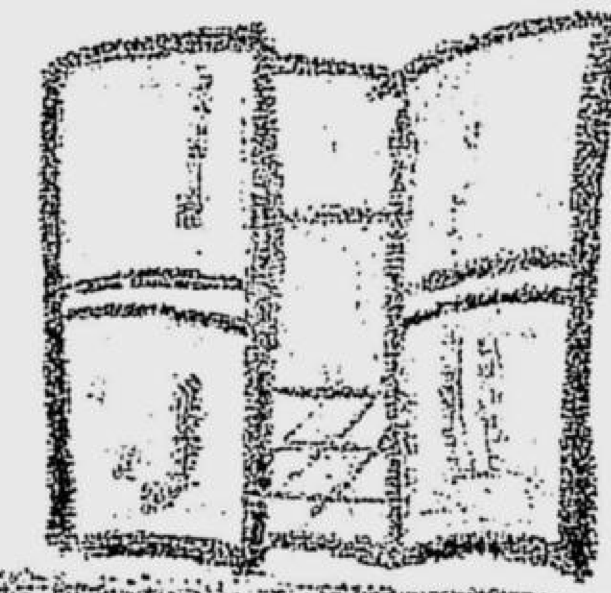
Sound Familiar

Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers



You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



Writing is her new hobby

DEAR JI,

HI! Thank you for publishing my works in the September 21, 2002 issue of the Junior Inquirer. This made me an instant superstar especially when I showed it to my classmates. They were surprised to see my works and I was so happy then. I am also inspired to write more poems and stories so that I could send them to you for publication. I guess writing will become a new hobby for me.—**ROMA AIRIA P. GARCIA**, 10, Spirit Wings Learning Foundation, Indang, Cavite.

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A Gathering of Three Great Men

Story by J.E. Royeca
Illustrations by Dindo Llana

MIONG walked home silently, his head bowed. He was sad because his classmates at the Colegio de San Juan de Letran in Intramuros again made fun of his shabby clothes, belt, shoes, and bag. His classmates wore elegant clothes and had nice shoes, belts, and bags.

While crossing the Puente de España, Miong saw some of his classmates heading home in shiny carriages. The Pasig River below was blue. Miong stared at it. Boys were taking baths on its banks. The air blowing over it from the Manila Bay was fresh.

He took a stroll along the Escolta, a street very famous for its stores, bazaars, warehouses, elegant buildings, and beautiful homes.

Were they rich, his parents could buy him nice clothes and things and they would live here in the Escolta or in Villa San Miguel.

But Miong's father was only a low-salaried employee while his mother was a plain housewife. Sometimes she earned extra money by working as a midwife.

IT WAS November 1887, already five months to his studies at the Colegio de San Juan de Letran. If he could finish his studies after five years, he would earn a Bachelor of Arts degree and he could then enroll at the University of Santo Tomas.

Miong wanted to be a lawyer so he could help poor people, especially those being maltreated by the Spaniards.

But his classmates had made a habit of pestering him. Miong sometimes felt he had no desire to sit in class again.

He kept walking. He was now along Anloague Street, still a distance from their house in Trozo, Tondo.

When he reached Tutuban he sat on a bamboo bench made under a bulky calachuchi tree to while away the rest of the afternoon. He watched the orange sun on the Manila Bay. It was a cool, lovely afternoon.

Miong was sad. Even the teachers—who were all Spaniards—ridiculed him. He sobbed, wiping the little tears in his eyes with the sleeve of his shirt.

On the corner of the street, he saw a nicely-attired young man alighting from a carriage. The man walked along the street and passed Miong. He glanced at the boy over his shoulder as he passed him. Miong saw him enter a pharmacy.

Miong remained seated. He thought about his studies; what his parents would say if he told them he would stop; and what would happen to him afterward. He would no longer be a lawyer. What would he be when he grew older?

"WHY are you crying, totoy?" someone asked him from behind.

Miong looked up, wiping his eyes. It was the man who passed him. He was now clutching a small paper bag filled with medicine.

"Did someone hurt you?" the young man asked again. He was quite in a hurry to go. Miong noticed it in his voice.

"No, señor," he answered.

"Where do you attend school?" the young man said, glancing at Miong's books and things.

"At the Colegio de San Juan de Letran, señor."

The young man nodded. "Why were you crying?"

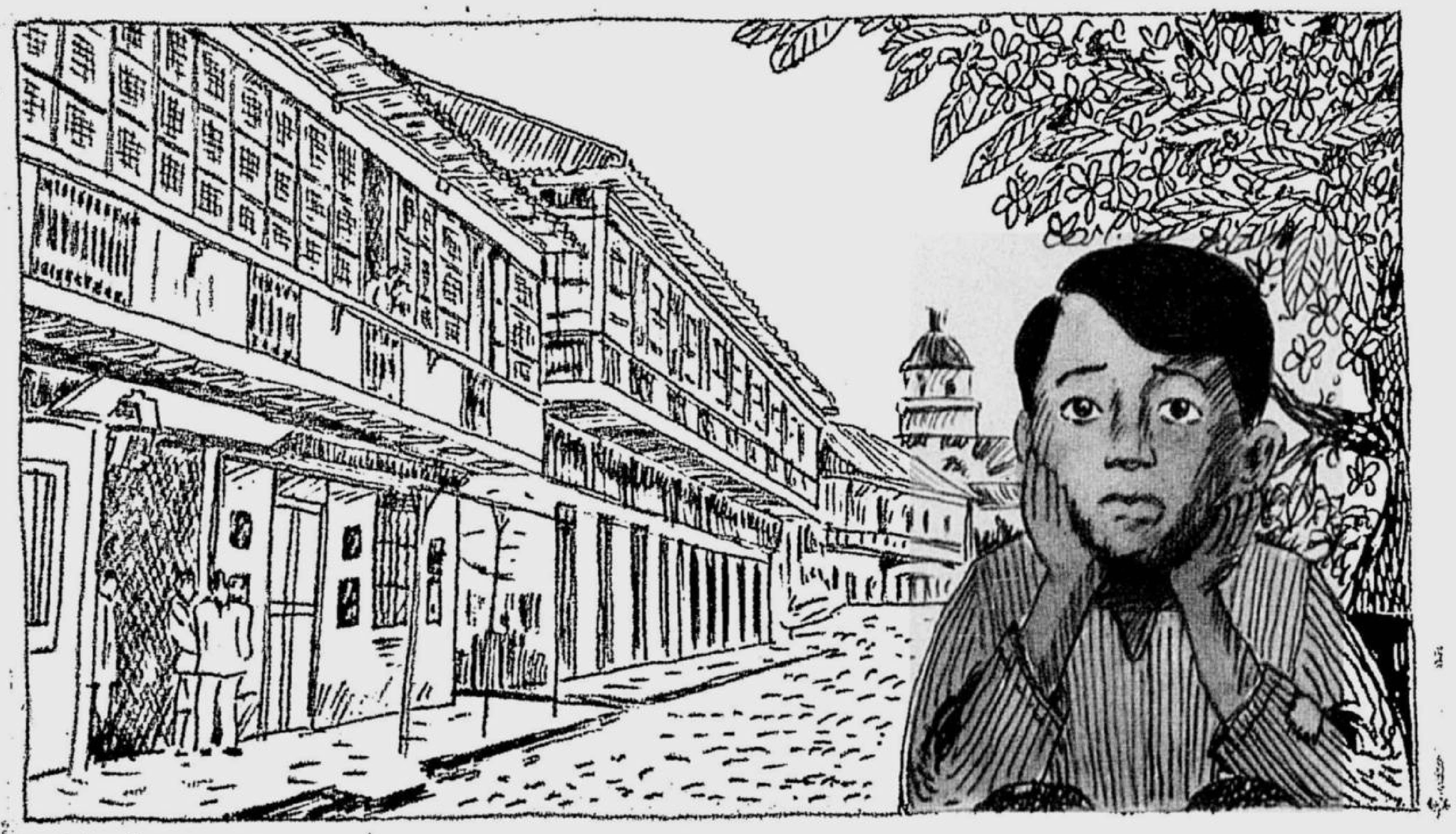
"It's because of my clothes, shoes, belt, and things. My friends and teachers. . ."

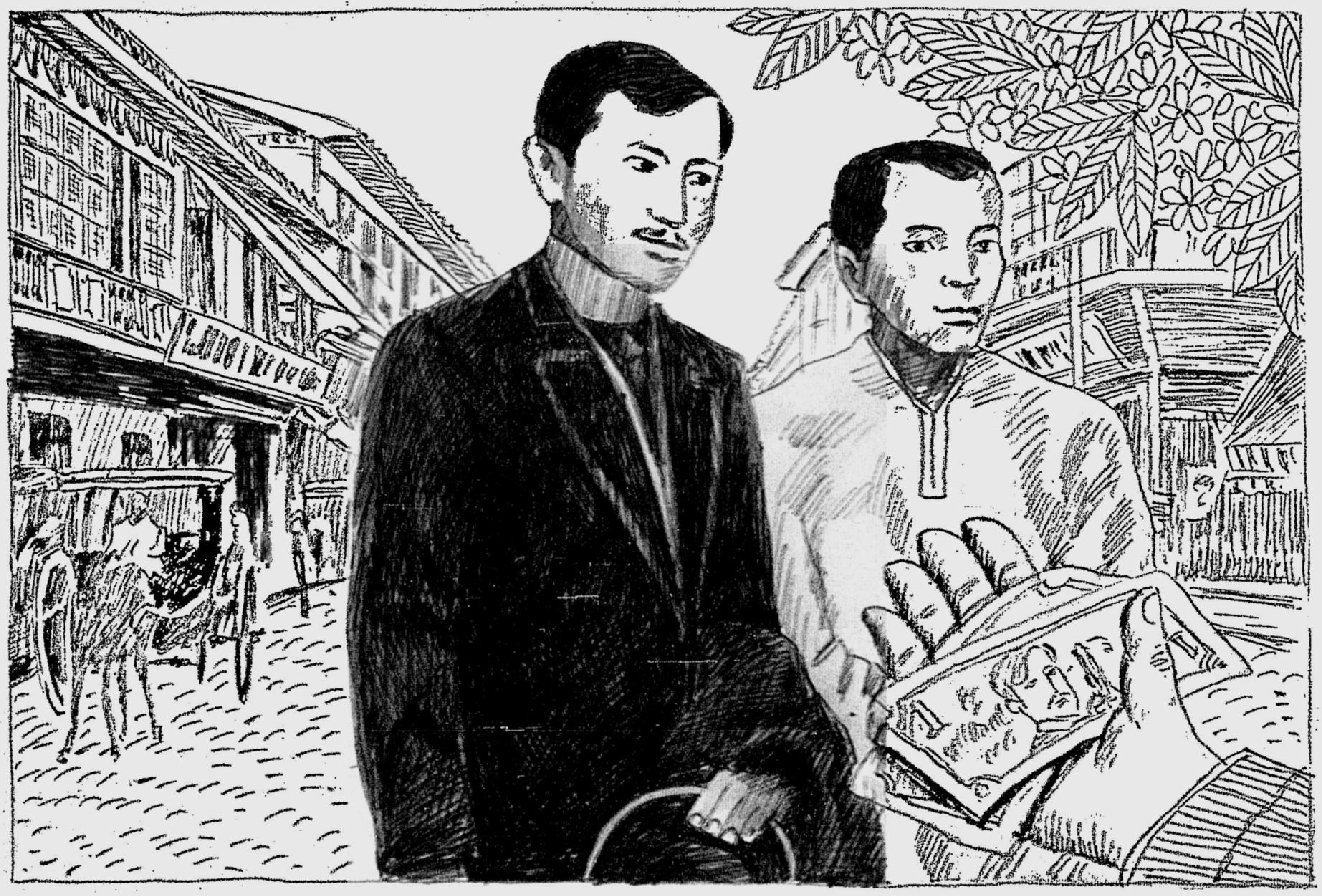
The young man nodded. He seemed to understand. "I see," he said.

Miong saw Andres, a family friend, going their way. He stood up to greet him. Andres was a family friend because he was a close friend of one of his uncles' and he had been to their house many times. Andres and the young man looked of the same age.

"Miong, you're not home yet?" Andres said.

Andres gave Miong a look. "Your classmates





"I am Andres Bonifacio, señor," Andres informed him. "And this is Emilio Jacinto, my friend's nephew." "I am Jose Rizal, señor," the man said.

made fun of you again, didn't they?"

Miong meekly nodded.

"Don't mind them. Just study and study," Andres consoled him. "I've promised you, I'd buy you new clothes when I get my salary."

"I don't think I am going back there again," Miong said. The young man and Andres looked alarmed at what he said.

The young man took money from his pocket, counted those paper bills, and handed them to Miong. "Here, take this. Buy some new clothes, new shoes, and new things. Don't stop studying. It is very important for a man to learn. Here, take it."

Miong hesitated. He would not take anything from someone he didn't know.

"I'm sorry señor," Andres intervened. "We don't even know you."

"I don't know you either, señor," the young man said.

"I am Andres Bonifacio, señor," Andres informed him. "And this is Emilio Jacinto, my friend's nephew."

"I am Jose Rizal, señor," the man said. "Take this money. I would like to help since I have something to give the boy right now," the man said. He took Miong's hand and put the money there. He called a carriage, got in, and went away.

ANDRES was surprised and amazed. It was the famous Dr. Jose Rizal, the author of the "Noli Me Tangere" novel that he had been reading for weeks now.

"So that was Dr. Jose Rizal," Andres was overjoyed that he had met him.

Because of the money given him, Miong was able

A Gathering/ p. 11

Princess of Karate

Hyaa! Princess Ericka, 6, is no shy girl in a karate gi

By Margaux C. Ortiz

IT all started with a weekend trip to the mall. Then 4-year-old Princess Ericka Sumugoy was spending a relaxing day with her family in Ali Mall, Cubao when they passed by a martial arts studio. Princess was mesmerized by the way karate, a popular Japanese art of self-defense, enabled the people inside to execute such graceful, fluid movements. She immediately knew she wanted to learn karate, too.

"The first time she showed up for her karate lessons, her instructor said that Princess had potential to master the sport because she had strong, firm arms (very important in karate). She also had this very determined look in her eyes," mom Carol shares.

Two years and many successful competitions later, Princess is now a proud brown belter. This is an admirable achievement for the 6-year-old since many of her past challengers have been at least five years older than she is.

First in the Family

Because of the kid's early accomplishments in the sport, her dad and teenage brother were eventually encouraged to take up karate lessons, too.

"Her dad is still a purple belt," grins Princess' mom. "It's fun to see that our little girl is the first member of the family to realize her athletic gift."

Even though the Kinder 2 student from National Federation of Women's Club in Project 4, Quezon City can already kick and deliver open-handed blows like a pro, she refuses to use whatever she has learned in karate class in school or at home.

"Unless it's really, really necessary," emphasizes the little martial arts expert. "We were taught to be disciplined and restrained in practicing karate. We cannot just kick or hurt anybody just because we feel like doing it."

Shy and soft-spoken, Princess is completely transformed when donned in her karate robe and belt. She performs her exhibitions with such grace and precision that you forget that she's a 6-year-old kid.

"I clear my mind and try my best to focus," says Princess. She also silently prays that she remembers all the techniques she has committed to heart.

We also silently pray that this promising princess of karate someday shine in prestigious international competitions like the Asian Games and the Olympics.

BROWN belter Princess at practice.

JOHNNY VILLENA

R U 'RRIFIC?

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rrific' or know someone who is, fill out the the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a

FREE Junior Inquirer & CASIO EMI T-shirt, Plus! a chance to win a Keylighting keyboard!

Kids'r'rrific nomination form

I nominate: ______________________

Age: ______________________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)

____

She/he lives at ______________________

and studies at ______________________

Her/his contact number is: ______________________

Sender's Name: ______________________

Sender's Age & School: ______________________

Sender's Address: ______________________

Sender's Contact No.: ______________________

KEY LIGHTING KEYBOARD Only from CASIO

Arnold Arre:

Comic book author and artist

This dude is the envy and object of admiration of many comics fans in the Philippines

By Eline Santos

"IT'S okay to play around. Write whatever you want," so encourages Arnold Arre, one of the talented, creative people we have to thank for some of the local comic book titles we enjoy today.

Arnold has written and illustrated two Manila Critics Circle Award-winning comic books ("Mythology Class" and "Trip to Tagaytay") and his latest creation, "After Eden," has recently hit the bookstores.

The 31-year-old artist was bitten by the bug when he borrowed his brother's comic books at the age of six.

"As a kid, when we see pictures and words, it's a different medium," he says. "Right after reading it, I wanted to do my own. Make my own stories, my own characters. That's how I got hooked."

And with his dream come true, he's been hooking everyone else with his stories.

"I've been getting a lot of letters to do a sequel to 'Mythology Class'," he relates, but Arnold hasn't decided yet what he's going to do next.

"Right now I'm taking a break," he laughs. After all, his recent project took four years in the making.

"It's hard to write a love story," he admits.

"I observe people, observe situations. I get inspiration from everyday life."

Maybe that's why he was only able to finish "After Eden" when he had his real-life love and Tala Studios partner, Cynthia. He doesn't recommend "After Eden" for kids though. "It's more for adults," he says somewhat apologetically.

But why let that stop you from getting his autograph? Arnold will be at Powerbooks, Glorietta, 3 p.m. on Nov. 30, to end a book signing tour.

In sum, his advice to aspiring comic book makers is: "Keep your imagination going. Be original. Come up with your own style. Finally, enjoy what you do."

ARNOLD and his latest work "After Eden" at Comic Quest.

JOHNNY VILLENA

Do you know a grown-up who

- is fun to be with
- has an exciting job
- keeps an amazing hobby
- is all of the above???

If you know a grown-up whom all kids will love, give him or her the stamp:

A.K.A. COOL

Just fill out the nomination form below and tell us why your fave grown-up is the absolute coolest. If your nominee is chosen, ***YOU'LL*** *get a free JI T-shirt! Now that's really cool.*

A.K.A. COOL
is an 'adult known as cool'
They're the folks
in our own family
Or the people
we meet in school.

I nominate _______________.
He/She is _________ years old and
is my _______________.
Here are five super solid reasons why I think you should write about him/her:
1)____________________;
2)____________________;
3)____________________;
4)____________________;
5)____________________;

My nominee lives a____________
_ ____________________.
Give him/her a call at _________
or send him/her an e-mail at ____
____________________.
By the way, I'm ___________
____________________.
I'm__________years old.
My address is______________
____________________.
You may call me at__________
____________________.

Thinkathon

REMEMBER NOVEMBER?

1. Name one of two Philippine presidents born in the month of November.

2. Aboard the Soviet spacecraft Sputnik 2, a Soviet female dog named Laika became the first living creature in space on November 3, 1957. Did she return safely to Earth?

3. What typhoon devastated Ormoc City and the provinces of Leyte and Southern Leyte on November 5, 1991?
   - o Yoling
   - o Rosing
   - o Uring

4. On November 4, 1939, a Packard drew much attention at a Chicago motor exhibition because it was the first car in the world to have what?
   - o air-conditioning
   - o AM-FM radio
   - o power steering

5. On November 7, 1930, what organization was founded by Crisanto Evangelista to unite Filipino workers under a socialist ideology?

6. What's the title of the only double album of the Beatles which was released in November 22, 1968?
   - o The Beatles
   - o Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
   - o Abbey Road

7. What did Alfred Nobel, the Swedish founder of the Nobel Prizes, invent on November 25, 1867?

8. On November 21, 1849, Spanish Governor-General Narciso Claveria issued a decree requiring all native Filipinos to do what?
   - o learn to speak Spanish
   - o convert to Christianity
   - o adopt Spanish surnames

9. True or False? Gary Kasparov became the youngest ever world chess champion on November 9, 1985.

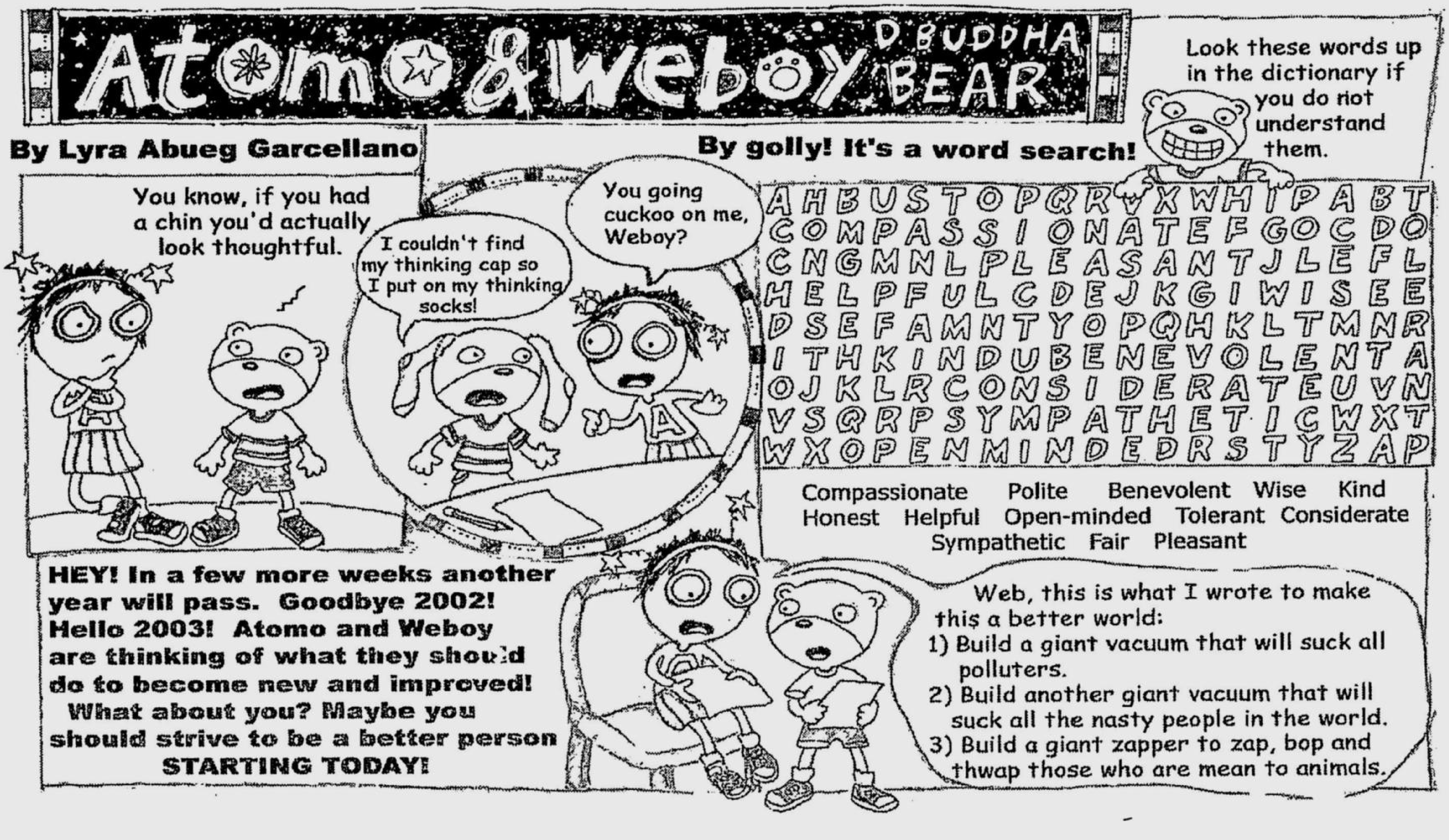
10. Andres Bonifacio was born on November 30 of what year?
   - o 1861
   - o 1863
   - o 1865

Answers:

1. Carlos P. Garcia (Nov. 4, 1896); Elpidio Quirino (Nov. 16, 1890)
2. No (She died in space when her oxygen supply ran out.)
3. Uring
4. air-conditioning
5. Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (Communist Party of the Philippines)
6. The Beatles
7. dynamite
8. adopt Spanish surnames
9. True
10. 1863

Ratings:

superbrain!
9-10
excellent!
7-8
good!
5-6


Atomo & Weboy D Buddha Bear
You know, if you had a chin you'd actually look thoughtful.
I couldn't find my thinking cap so I put on my thinking socks!
You going cuckoo on me, Weboy?
A
Look these words up in the dictionary if you do not understand them.

By Lyra Abueg Garcellano

By golly! It's a word search!

```
AHBUSTOPQRVXWHIPABT
COMPASSIONATEFGOCDO
CNGMNLPLEASANTJLEFL
HELPFULCDEJKGIWISEE
DSEFAMNTYOPQHKLTMNR
ITHKINDUBENEVOLENTA
OJKLRCONSIDERATEUVN
VSQRPSYMPATHETICWXT
WXOPENMINDEDRSTYZAP
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Compassionate Polite Benevolent Wise Kind
Honest Helpful Open-minded Tolerant Considerate
Sympathetic Fair Pleasant

HEY! In a few more weeks another year will pass. Goodbye 2002! Hello 2003! Atomo and Weboy are thinking of what they should do to become new and improved! What about you? Maybe you should strive to be a better person STARTING TODAY!

Web, this is what I wrote to make this a better world:
1) Build a giant vacuum that will suck all polluters.
2) Build another giant vacuum that will suck all the nasty people in the world.
3) Build a giant zapper to zap, bop and thwap those who are mean to animals.

A Gathering of Three Great Men (from page 7)

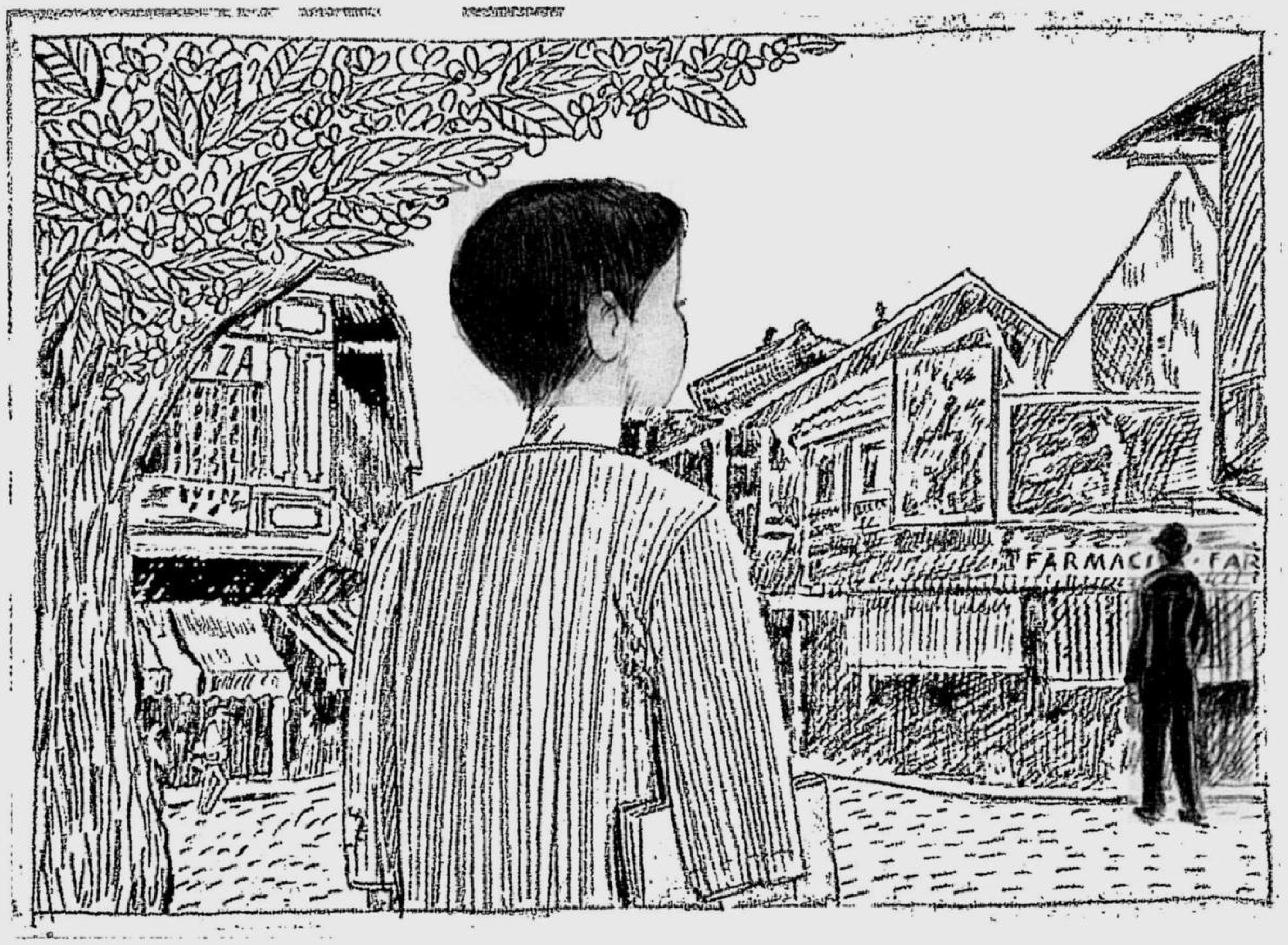
to have new clothes, new shoes, and other new things. He was very happy to go back to school. He studied hard and eventually graduated as an outstanding student. He then enrolled in law at the University of Santo Tomas.

When he was 19 years old, he joined the Katipunan, a secret society which was seeking to liberate the Philippines by means of a revolution from the cruel rule of the Spaniards. Andres Bonifacio founded it. Miong became Bonifacio's most trusted man and sole adviser.

Because the revolution broke out, he was not able to finish his law studies. He instead wrote documents for the Katipunan and advised Andres on important and decisive matters. Because of his brilliant mind and love of country, Emilio Jacinto became one of the greatest heroes of the Filipino nation and is now known in history as the Brains of the Katipunan.

***J.E.**. loves to write historical fiction for kids.*

***Dindo** is currently a graphic designer and food stylist. He continues to illustrate and paint. He is also a member of Ang Ilustrador ng Kabataan (Ang InK).*



Spinning Darkness

A RUNAWAY black hole is streaking through the Milky Way galaxy, dragging an ageing star along to snack on as it heads in Earth's general direction, astronomers reported.

There is absolutely no need to panic, though: the black hole will get no closer to our solar system than 1,000 light-years, and that will not happen for 200 million years or so. Right now it is between 6,000 and 9,000 light-years away.

A light-year is about 6 trillion miles (10 trillion km), the distance light travels in a year.

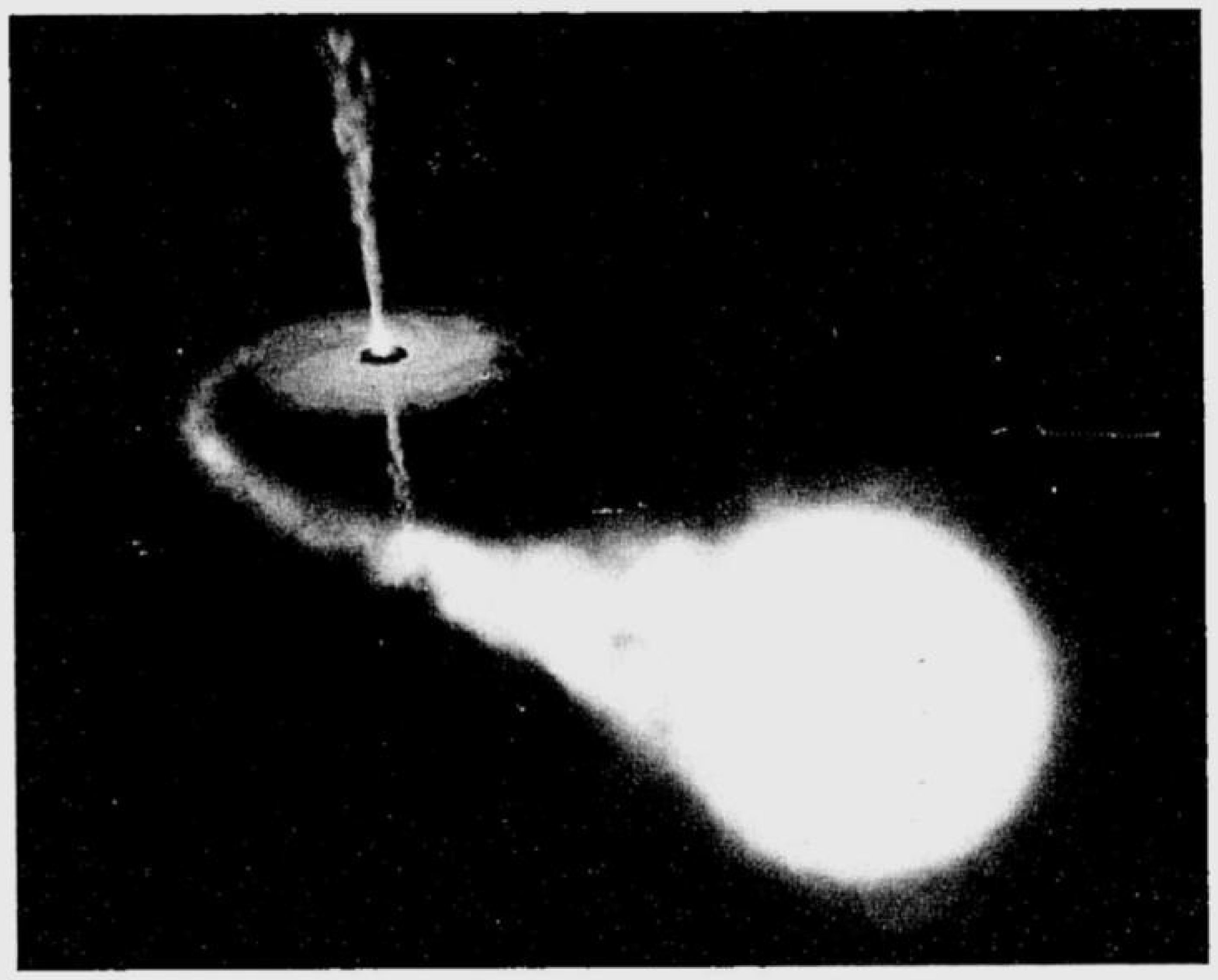
Still, astronomers using the Hubble Space Telescope to track the black hole are excited about it, because it gives them the best evidence yet that it was created when a star several times the mass of our sun blew up in a vast explosion known as a supernova.

Black holes are voracious matter-sucking drains in space that exert so much gravitational force that nothing, not even light, can escape their pull. While black holes themselves cannot be seen, they can be detected by the characteristic swirl of material falling into them.

In this case, the Hubble telescope's sharp sight has enabled it to see the black hole's companion star, which it is gradually gobbling as it hurtles through the galaxy.

Most black holes tend to stay put, often at the center of galaxies, including our own Milky Way.

But Felix Mirabel, of the French Atomic Energy Commission and the Institute for Astronomy and Space Physics/Conicet of Argentina, said this is only the second black hole found to be moving at high speed. *Reuters* .



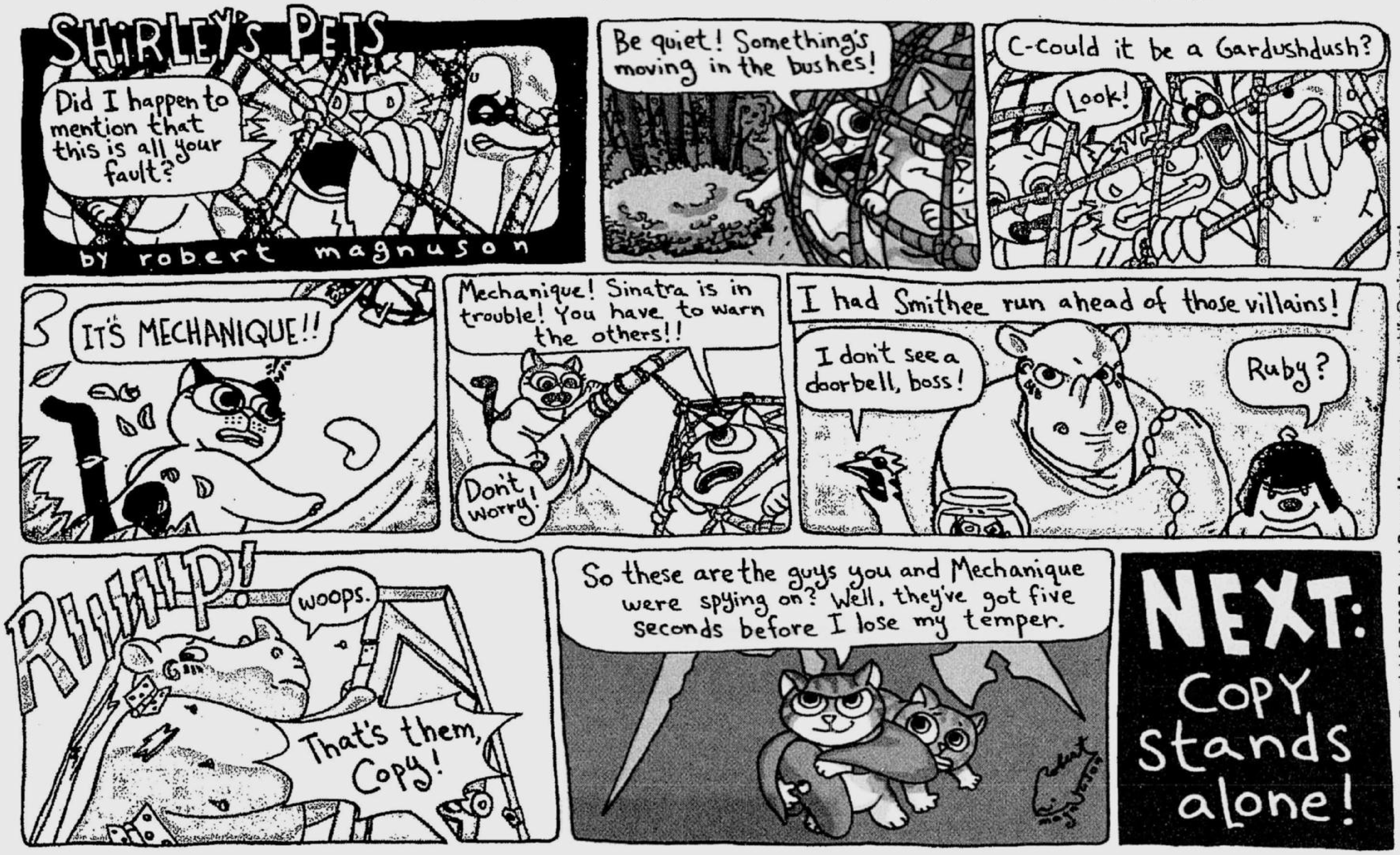
A NEARBY black hole is shown hurtling like a cannonball through the galaxy in this artist's concept. REUTERS

The Spirit of Christmas (from page 5)

ninangs to ask for aguinaldo. We would call out "Mamamasko nga po!" We were given coins or bills.

After this we went back to Lola's for a nice lunch. While we were eating, some children also came by to ask for aguinaldo. Of course, we also gave them some money as our way of sharing the Christmas spirit. This is the spirit that Jesus wants us to show. Give and share your gifts with others.

Last Episode: In an attempt to rescue his friends, Little John inadvertantly falls into the clutches of the Rival Team. Now, with every animal hero out of their way, Pancho leads his group to Shirley's home with the intention of acquiring the last hero membership ring...


SHiRLEY'S PETS
Did I happen to mention that this is all your fault?
by robert magnuson
Be quiet! Something's moving in the bushes!
C-Could it be a Gardushdush?
Look!
IT'S MECHANIQUE!!
Mechanique! Sinatra is in trouble! You have to warn the others!!
Don't worry!
I had Smithee run ahead of those villains!
I don't see a doorbell, boss!
Ruby?
RIIIIIP!
woops.
That's them, Copy!
So these are the guys you and Mechanique were spying on? Well, they've got five seconds before I lose my temper.
NEXT: Copy stands alone!

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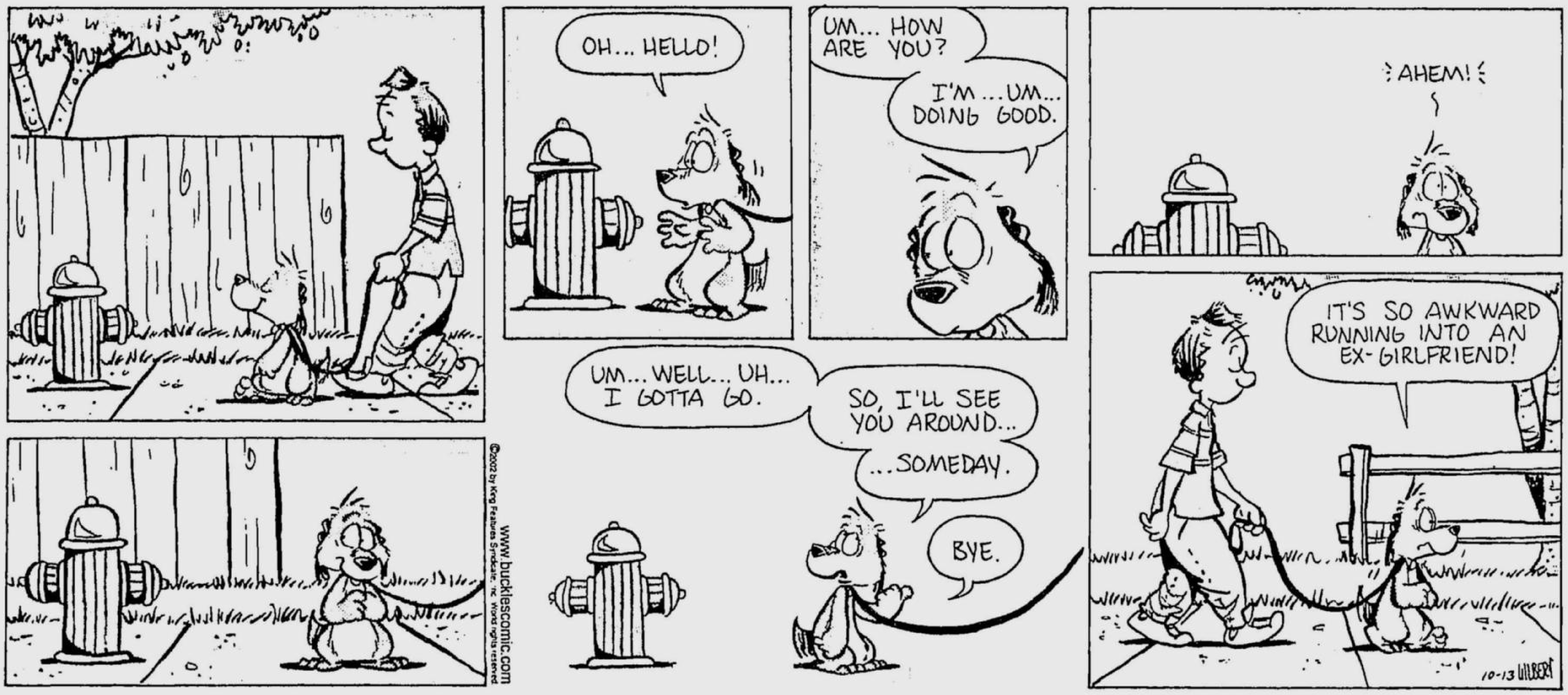
email: shifu@animail.net

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


OH... HELLO!
UM... HOW ARE YOU?
I'M ...UM... DOING GOOD.
AHEM!
IT'S SO AWKWARD RUNNING INTO AN EX-GIRLFRIEND!
UM... WELL... UH... I GOTTA GO.
SO, I'LL SEE YOU AROUND...
...SOMEDAY.
BYE.
10-13 GILBERT

www.bucklescomic.com

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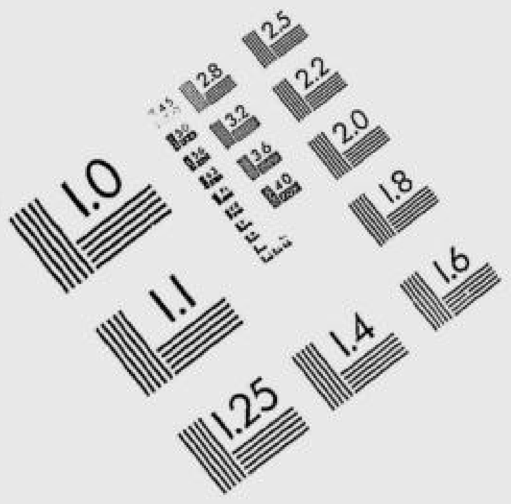
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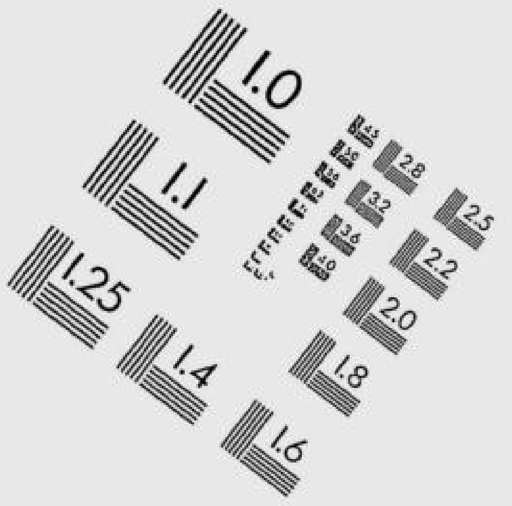
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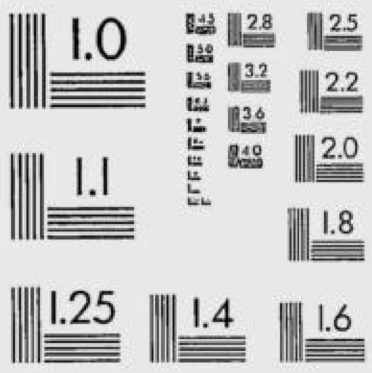
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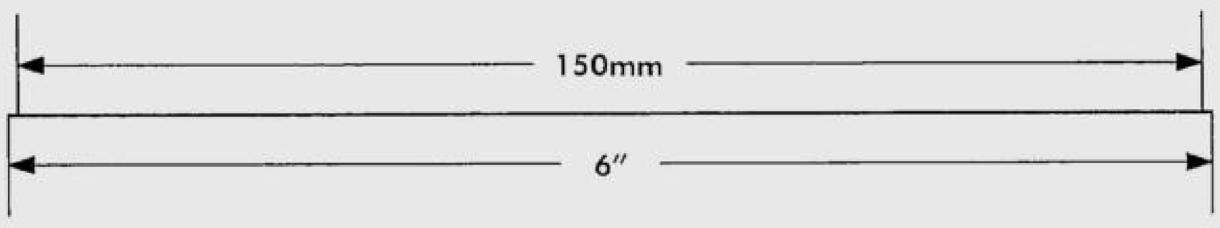

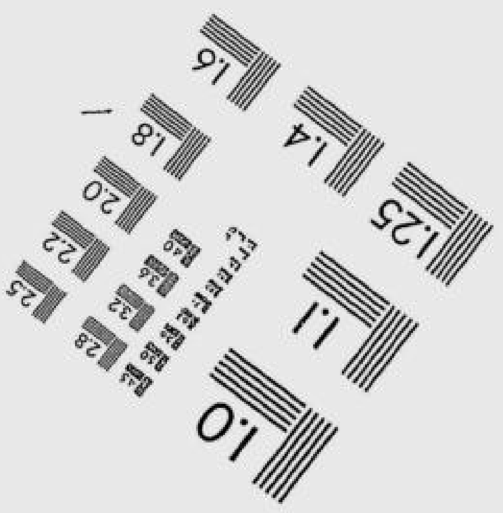
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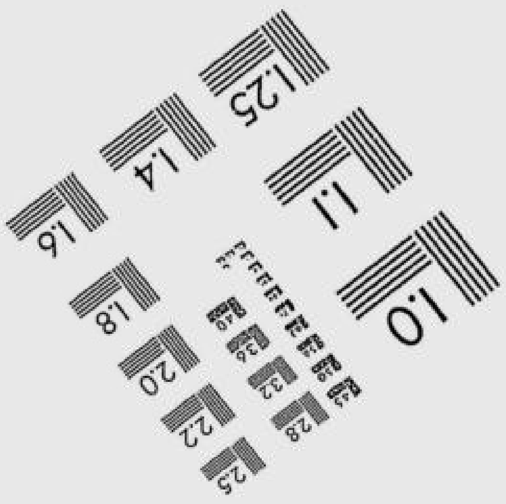
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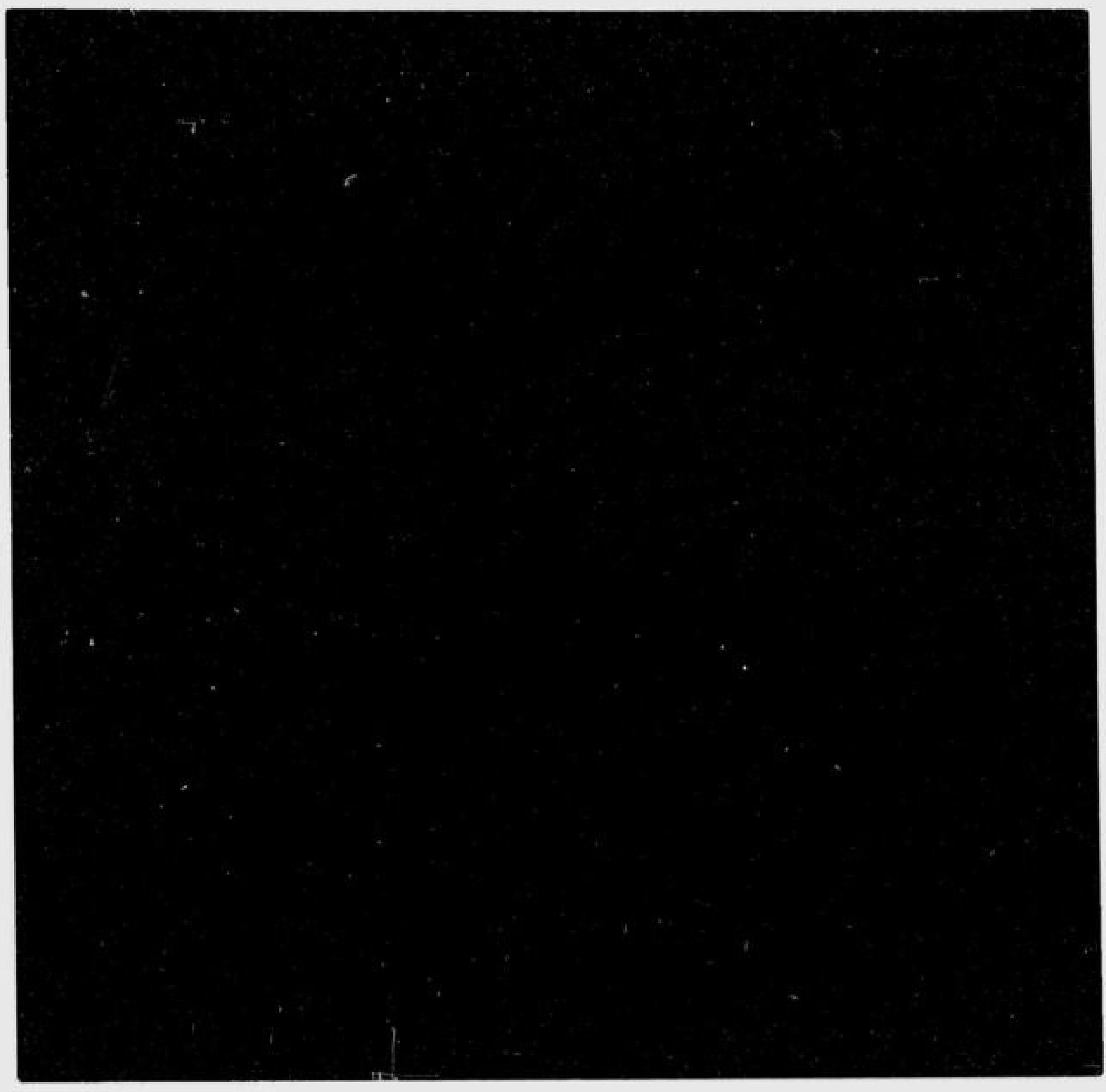

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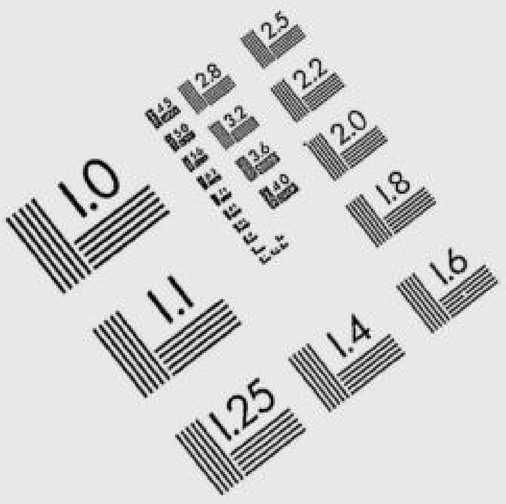
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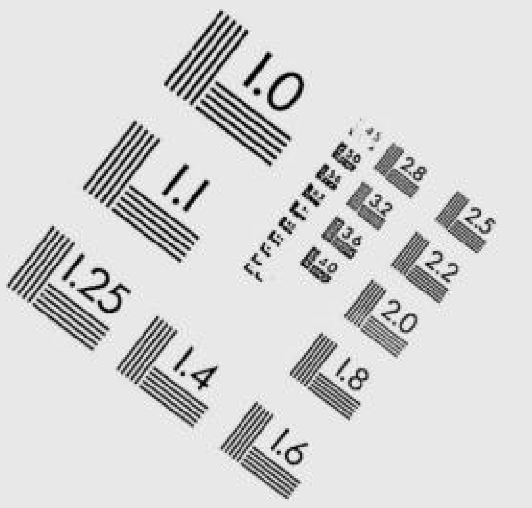
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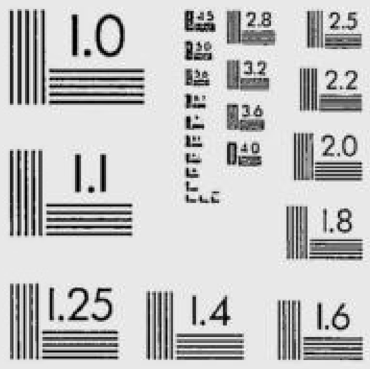
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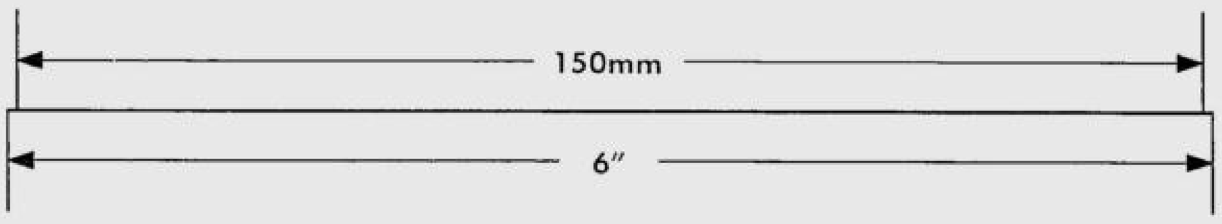

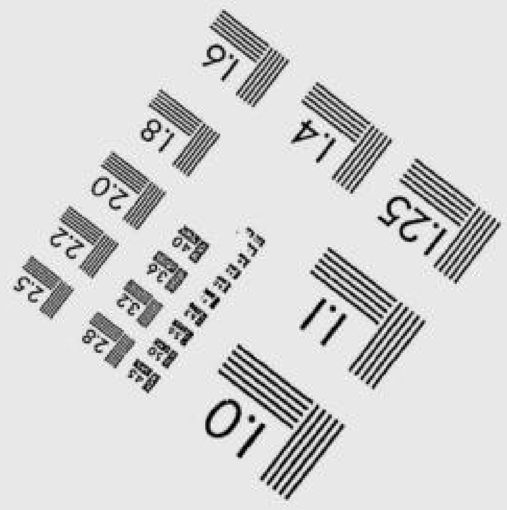
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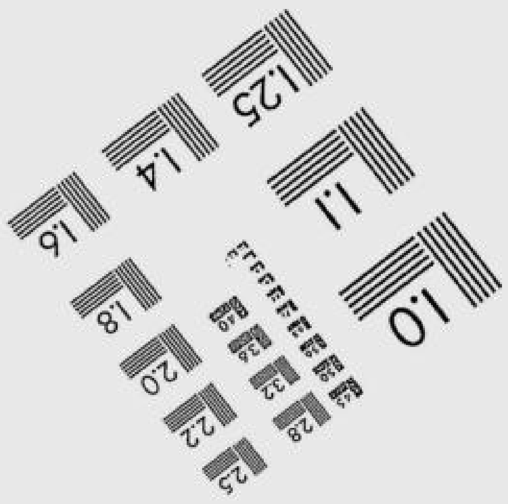
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1.4
1.6
1.8
2.0
2.2
2.5
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0